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Official: Sailor used service weapon to kill at Pearl Harbor

A. McAVOY, J. SINCO KELLEHER and C. JONES
Associated Press

HONOLULU (AP) — A U.S. sailor shot three civilians with his service weapon, killing two of them, before taking his own life at Pearl Harbor, just days before thousands descend on the storied military base to mark the 78th anniversary of the Japanese bombing that propelled the United States into World War II. The Pearl Harbor National Memorial already had plans for additional security for the annual ceremony before the shooting Wednesday across the harbor at the Navy's shipyard, spokesman Jay Blount said. About a dozen survivors of the Dec. 7, 1941, bombing were expected to attend Saturday, along with dignitaries and service members.



Security stands guard outside the main gate at Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam, in Hawaii, Wednesday, Dec. 4, 2019.

Continued on Page 2

Associated Press

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Pearl Harbor

Continued from Front

The shooter was identified Thursday as 22-year-old G. Romero, according to a military official who spoke on condition of anonymity to provide details that had not been made public. Romero's job was to stand watch on the fast attack submarine USS Columbia, which is at Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam for maintenance. He used his service rifle to shoot the victims, then killed himself with his service pistol, the official said.

Rear Adm. Robert Chad-

wick, commander of Navy Region Hawaii, said he didn't know the motive for the shooting Wednesday at the naval shipyard within the base. The wounded victim was hospitalized in stable condition. It wasn't known if the sailor and the three men working for the U.S. Department of Defense knew each other, Chadwick said. "We have no indication yet whether they were targeted or if it was a random shooting," Chadwick said. Tara Kapoi told The Associated Press that her 30-year-old husband, Vincent Ka-



The USS Arizona Memorial can be seen from the Pearl Harbor National Memorial Wednesday, Dec. 4, 2019, in Honolulu.

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poi Jr., was one of those killed. She said he worked at the shipyard and grew up in Waianae, a town on the west side of Oahu. "We don't know what happened," she said Thursday, asking for privacy. Names of the other victims have not been released. It wasn't immediately known how many shots were fired. Chadwick said that was part of the investigation. Mass shootings and gun violence are rare in Hawaii. It had the lowest gun death rate among the states in 2017, according to the Giffords Law Center to Prevent Gun Violence. The islands have strict firearms laws, including a ban on assault weapons and large-capacity ammunition magazines. In 1999, a Xerox service technician shot and killed seven coworkers in Hawaii.

In 2006, a man fatally shot his taxi driver and a couple taking photos of the city lights from a lookout point in the hills above Honolulu. Hawaii Gov. David Ige said the White House has offered assistance from federal agencies and that the state is also ready to help if needed. "I join in solidarity with the people of Hawaii as we express our heartbreak over this tragedy and concern for those affected by the shooting," Ige said in a statement. The Pearl Harbor Naval Shipyard repairs, maintains and modernizes the ships and submarines of the U.S. Pacific Fleet, which is headquartered at Pearl Harbor. The base is the home port for 10 destroyers and 15 submarines. It also hosts Air Force units. The shipyard is across the harbor from the wreckage

Associated Press
of USS Arizona, which sank in the Dec. 7, 1941, Japanese attack. More than 2,300 Americans were killed in the bombing. The shipyard has played a key role in naval history, most notably during World War II. Shipyard workers were given just days to repair the USS Yorktown, an aircraft carrier severely damaged during the Battle of the Coral Sea in 1942, because the Navy needed to quickly send the ship to Midway to meet Japanese forces. Some 1,400 shipyard workers labored around the clock for almost 72 hours to patch together the carrier. The planes the Yorktown delivered to Midway sank one of the four aircraft carriers Japan sent to the battle and helped destroy two others. The Battle of Midway turned the tide of the war in U.S. favor. □

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Georgia GOP Rep. Tom Graves to retire

WASHINGTON (AP) — Georgia Republican Rep. Tom Graves said Thursday he'll retire after his current term in Congress, joining a larger-than-typical group of lawmakers taking their leave from an increasingly partisan and unproductive Washington.

The six-term congressman is the 21st House Republican to announce his retirement, and the third Capitol Hill lawmaker from Georgia who won't seek re-election in 2020. Health problems are prompting Republi-

can Sen. Johnny Isakson to step down at the end of December. GOP Rep. Rob Woodall, narrowly reelected last year in a diversifying district outside Atlanta, will exit at the end of next year. In a state ment addressing his constituents, 49-year-old Graves of Ranger called his decade in Washington "an honor that won't be replicated." But he said he's "entering a new season in life" with his wife nearing retirement and their children now young adults. "So, the time has come for me to

pass the baton," Graves said, adding, "I have decided not to seek reelection in 2020, and instead, join my family in their new and unique journeys." Graves has been a GOP loyalist since winning a special election in 2010. He is a senior member of the powerful Appropriations Committee and is the top Republican on a panel established by majority Democrats to reform the operations of Congress. Graves was among 60 GOP congressmen in October who voted



In this April 9, 2019 file photo, Rep. Tom Graves, R-Ga., speaks during a hearing on Capitol Hill in Washington.

Associated Press

against a bipartisan House resolution that rebuked President Donald Trump for his decision to withdraw U.S. troops from Syria. Be-

fore he ran for Congress, Graves served seven years in the Georgia legislature. He was first elected to office at age 32. □



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Articles of impeachment: Explaining what's next in the House

By **MARY CLARE JALONICK**
Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — House Speaker Nancy Pelosi said Thursday that Democrats will draft articles of impeachment against President Trump, a crucial step toward a vote of the full House.

The articles are likely to mostly encompass Democrats' findings on Trump's dealings with Ukraine. Democrats are still writing them, but the articles could charge Trump with abuse of office, bribery and obstruction.

Lawmakers and staff are expected to finish drafting the articles in the coming days, a process that is being led by Pelosi and the House Judiciary Committee. That panel could approve the articles as early as next week, setting up a vote of the full House in the days before Christmas.

A breakdown of what it means, how the process works and what the articles might say:

WHAT ARE ARTICLES OF IMPEACHMENT?

Articles of impeachment



Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi, D-Calif., meets with reporters during her weekly news conference at the Capitol in Washington, Thursday, Dec. 5, 2019.

are charges against the president. If the House approves them, they are then sent to the Senate for a trial and eventual vote. There can be as few or as many articles as the House de-

cides.

In a Senate trial, senators are jurors and select House members act as prosecutors, or impeachment managers. The chief justice of the Supreme

Associated Press

Court presides. If the Senate approves an article of impeachment with a two-thirds vote of "guilty," the president is convicted and removed from office. If all the articles are rejected, the president is acquitted. While the process has the trappings of a criminal trial, the decision is purely political.

This is the fourth time in history Congress has moved to impeach a president. If he were convicted by the Senate, Trump would be the first to be removed. But that is unlikely in the GOP-controlled Senate.

WHAT THE ARTICLES WILL COVER

The articles of impeachment are likely to encompass two major themes — abuse of office and obstruction. But they could be divided up into multiple articles.

An impeachment article accusing Trump of abuse of office, or abuse of power, would focus on the findings of the Ukraine investigation and his efforts to persuade the Ukrainian government to investigate Democrats as the U.S. withheld military aid. That conduct is the focus of a House Intelligence Committee report that will be presented to the Judi-

ciary panel for consideration in a Monday hearing. Some lawmakers have suggested that Democrats could break out "bribery" as a separate article. It would likely center on Trump withholding the aid, and also withholding a White House meeting with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskiy, in exchange for the political investigations.

Obstruction articles could be broken up into obstruction of Congress and obstruction of justice, or the two could be combined. The administration's repeated refusals to provide documents and testimony would serve as the basis for an article charging Trump with obstruction of Congress. If Democrats decide to draft an article on obstruction of justice, it could mention the findings of special counsel Robert Mueller's investigation.

DIFFERING DEMOCRATIC VIEWS

There has been an internal debate in the House Democratic caucus about how many articles to write and how much to include — and whether to include matters beyond Ukraine at all. Some moderate Democrats have argued that the articles should focus solely on Ukraine, as they believe it's a clearer case. Others say they can't ignore Mueller's report, which said that Trump couldn't be exonerated of obstructing the special counsel's investigation. He essentially left the matter up to Congress.

Virginia Rep. Gerry Connolly says it would be a "terrible mistake" to ignore obstruction of justice as laid out by Mueller. But he said Democrats "certainly don't want everything in the kitchen sink" in the articles, either.

"I think we should keep it as simple as possible," said California Rep. Eric Swalwell, a member of the Judiciary and Intelligence panels. "I think it's important that this is digestible for everyday Americans who are understandably busy, but understand what a shake-down is, too." □

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Report: Teen who died in U.S. custody unresponsive for hours

HOUSTON (AP) — Video showing the U.S. Border Patrol cell where a 16-year-old from Guatemala died of the flu shows the teen writhing and collapsing on the floor for hours before he was found dead.

The footage published Thursday by ProPublica calls into question the Border Patrol's treatment of Carlos Hernandez Vasquez, who was found dead May 20.

According to ProPublica, Carlos staggered to the toilet in his cell in the middle of the night at the Border Patrol station in Weslaco, Texas, and collapsed nearby. He remained still for more than four hours until his cellmate awakened at 6:05 a.m. and discovered him on the floor.

The cellmate quickly got the attention of a Border Patrol agent, followed shortly by a physician's assistant who attempted a single chest compression. Weslaco police reports obtained by ProPublica say the physician's assistant quickly determined Carlos was dead.

The Border Patrol's statement on the day of Carlos' death says the teenager was "found unresponsive this morning during a welfare check."

The video shows Carlos stopped moving at about 1:39 a.m. on May 20, 15 minutes after he toppled forward and landed face-first on the cell's concrete floor. Border Patrol logs say an agent performed a welfare check at 2:02 a.m., 4:09 a.m., and 5:05 a.m.

Dr. Norma Jean Farley, the forensic pathologist who performed the autopsy, told ProPublica that she was told the agent looked

through the window but didn't go inside.

Police photos show a large pool of blood around Carlos' head.

U.S. Customs and Border Protection issued a statement Thursday saying it could not discuss specifics of Carlos' death due to an ongoing investigation, but that the agency and the Department of Homeland Security "are looking into all aspects of this case to ensure all procedures were followed."

But CBP's former acting commissioner, John Sanders, said he believed the U.S. government "could have done more" to prevent the deaths of Carlos and at least five other children who died after being apprehended by border agents.

Sanders resigned as the Border Patrol was detaining thousands of people at a time, many for longer than the agency's own 72-hour deadline, sometimes for weeks at a time. As border crossings surged this spring, President Donald Trump's administration sought to hold people for longer to end what it derided as the "catch and release" of immigrant families.

But the Border Patrol was not equipped to detain people for that long. Reports of people jam-packed into cells without drinkable water or showers sparked national outrage. One group of lawyers that visited a Border Patrol station in Clint, Texas, described seeing hungry children trying to care for each other and one 4-year-old with matted hair who had gone without a shower for days.

The Border Patrol has since

reduced the number of people in its custody -- largely due to the rollout of policies such as "Remain in Mexico," in which the U.S. government has sent more than 55,000 people back across the border to await their court cases. Thousands of those people are now waiting in squalid border camps. □



This May 20, 2019 photo shows the Border Patrol Station in Weslaco, Texas.

Associated Press



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U.S. considers sending several thousand more troops to Mideast

By **MATTHEW LEE**

AP Diplomatic Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Pentagon is considering sending several thousand additional troops to the Middle East to help deter Iranian aggression, amid reports of escalating violence in Iran and continued meddling by Tehran in Iraq, Syria and other parts of the region.

John Rood, defense undersecretary for policy, told senators Thursday that Defense Secretary Mark Esper "intends to make changes" to the number of troops deployed in the region. Other officials said options under consideration could send between 5,000 and 7,000 troops to the Middle East, but they all stressed that there have been no final decisions yet. The officials spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss internal deliberations.

The troop deliberations follow several decisions since spring to beef up the U.S. presence in the Middle East because of a series of maritime attacks and bombings in Saudi Arabia that the U.S. and others have blamed on Iran.

President Donald Trump has approved those increases, even though he also routinely insists that he is pulling U.S. troops out of the Middle East and withdrawing from what he calls "endless wars" against extremists. In October, Trump told his supporters that despite the sacrificing of U.S. lives in Iraq and other parts of the Middle East, the region is less safe and stable today. "The single greatest mistake our country made in its history," he said, "was going into the quicksand of the Middle East."

Asked about a possible troop increase, Trump told reporters Thursday that, "We'll announce whether we will or not. Certainly there might be a threat. And if there is a threat, it will be met very strongly. But we will be announcing what we may be doing — may or may not be doing." Military leaders have argued that the U.S. needs to increase its presence in the

region in order to deter Iran from conducting more and broader attacks. Rood provided no details to back up why the additional troops are needed, but said the U.S. is concerned about recent intelligence indications suggesting an increased threat from Iran.

Rood was asked several times about reports that 14,000 more troops could be sent to the region. He repeatedly said Esper hasn't

mentary evidence to back up the claim. But Brian Hook, the U.S. special representative for Iran, told reporters the tally was based on a variety of reports coming out of Iran as well as intelligence analyses.

Speaking at the State Department, Hook said the U.S. had received and reviewed video of one specific incident of repression in the city of Mahshahr in which the Iranian Revolu-

brutal nationwide crackdown on the demonstrations, which started in response to gasoline price increases and rationing.

"We have seen reports of many hundreds more killed in and around Tehran," he said. "And, as the truth is trickling out of Iran, it appears the regime could have murdered over 1,000 Iranian citizens since the protests began." The dead include 13- and 14-year-old

nationwide statistics of the number of injuries, arrests or deaths from the unrest. However, Hook's numbers appear to match a figure put out late Wednesday by the Iranian exile group called the Mujahedeen-e-Khalq, which has paid Trump's personal lawyer Rudy Giuliani for speeches at its events in the past.

The MeK alleged late Wednesday that more than 1,000 people had been killed. It published a list of 320 people it said it had identified so far as having been killed but did not provide proof.

Iran has alleged MeK supporters and those backing exiled Crown Prince Reza Pahlavi, the son of the country's late shah, of being behind the unrest alongside foreign powers. It has not offered evidence to support those allegations.

In addition to the deaths, Hook said more than 7,000 protesters had been detained, with many sent to two prisons. Hook said that Pompeo had notified Congress on Thursday that both prisons would be hit with U.S. sanctions for gross human rights abuses. It was not immediately clear when those designations would occur.

Hook's comments come as the U.S. steps up its "maximum pressure campaign" on Iran that it began after withdrawing from the landmark 2015 nuclear deal last year. That campaign has been highlighted by the imposition of increasingly tough sanctions and an increase in rhetoric critical of Tehran and its leadership.

As part of the pressure campaign, Hook announced that the U.S. is offering a reward of up to \$15 million for information leading to the whereabouts of a top IRGC commander now believed to be supporting rebels in Yemen. He said Abdul Reza Shahalai was responsible for numerous attacks against U.S. forces in Iraq and had been behind a foiled plot to murder the Saudi ambassador to the United States in a Washington restaurant. □



In this photo released by the official website of the Office of the Iranian Presidency, President Hassan Rouhani speaks in a meeting in Tehran, Iran, Wednesday, Dec. 4, 2019.

Associated Press

made a decision yet, but didn't specifically confirm or deny the number, so his answers appeared only to confuse senators. Shortly after the hearing, Pentagon press secretary Alyssa Farah sent out a statement flatly denying the 14,000 number, saying Esper told the Senate committee chairman Thursday morning that "we are not considering sending 14,000 additional troops" to the region. The troop discussions came as the Trump administration on Thursday accused Iranian security forces of killing more than 1,000 people in crackdowns against recent protests that have swept the country.

The estimated death toll is significantly higher than previously estimates from human rights groups and others, and the administration did not present docu-

mentary evidence to back up the claim. But Brian Hook, the U.S. special representative for Iran, told reporters the tally was based on a variety of reports coming out of Iran as well as intelligence analyses.

Speaking at the State Department, Hook said the U.S. had received and reviewed video of one specific incident of repression in the city of Mahshahr in which the Iranian Revolutionary Guards Corps had mowed down at least 100 protesters with machine-gun fire.

He said the video was one of tens of thousands of submissions the U.S. has gotten since Secretary of State Mike Pompeo appealed last month for Iranians to submit evidence of atrocities by the authorities in putting down the protests. In it, he said IRGC forces can be seen opening fire on protesters blocking a road and then surrounding those who fled to nearby marshlands where they were sprayed with bullets. "In this one incident alone the regime murdered as many as 100 Iranians and possibly more," Hook told reporters at the State Department. He did not display the video but said the actions it depicted corresponded to accounts of a

children, he said.

Iran's mission to the United Nations did not immediately respond to a request for comment, and there was no immediate comment on state media in Iran.

There was no known public video that supported Hooks' allegation of a massacre in Mahshahr, although he said the State Department had gotten more than 32,000 responses to Pompeo's appeal for videos and other evidence using the encrypted messaging app Telegram, which is popular in Iran.

Nor has there been any widely accepted claim matching Hook's death toll of more than 1,000. Amnesty International believes at least 208 people have been killed and that the number could be higher. Iran has disputed that figure, but has refused to offer any



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Federal court considers bathroom use by transgender student

By JEFF AMY
Associated Press

ATLANTA (AP) — A student has the right to use the bathroom that corresponds to his gender identity, a lawyer told a federal court Thursday, arguing that the issue is about the right of transgender students to “equal dignity.”

But the Florida school district that’s appealing a lower court order in favor of the transgender boy told three judges on the 11th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals that they should overturn the ruling and let the school district restrict students to the bathroom matching their at-birth sex to protect the privacy of other students.

The case involves Drew Adams, who has since graduated from Nease High School outside Jacksonville. Adams transitioned from a girl to a boy before his freshman year, and used the boys’ room at the Ponte Vedra, Florida, school for a few weeks before several girls complained. Administrators barred him from the boys’ restroom and instead steered him toward single-user gender neutral restrooms. A lower court last year overturned that policy after a bench trial, ordering the St. Johns County school district to let Adams use the boys’ restroom.

The 11th Circuit could become the first federal appeals court to issue a binding ruling on the issue, which has arisen in several states. The ruling would cover schools in Florida,

Georgia and Alabama, and could carry the issue to the U.S. Supreme Court. The 4th Circuit had ruled in favor of a transgender Virginia student, but the U.S. Supreme Court sent the case back down for further consideration after the U.S. Department of Education, under President Donald Trump, withdrew guidance that said federal law called for treating transgender students equally, including allowing them to use the bathroom that matches their gender identity.

All the parties in the Atlanta courtroom Thursday were aware of the possibility that the ruling will set an important precedent. Lawyer Tara Borelli of Lambda Legal, who represents Adams, said after the hearing she was hoping schools will get “a clear statement that the law requires that transgender students be treated equally.”

But Circuit Judge Bill Pryor hammered Borelli, asking her how the judges could uphold the lower court ruling without setting the stage to allow anyone to ask for access to any bathroom or finding all sex-based distinctions illegal.

“These rationales apply to any form of sex-based segregation,” Pryor said.

Borelli, though, repeatedly underscored that Adams is not seeking to abolish distinctions between men and women.

“This case is only about me, a boy, being allowed to use the boys’ bathroom,” Adams said after the hear-

ing, echoing what Borelli told Pryor.

Adams, now a student at the University of Central Florida, told reporters that he’s never had a problem using a men’s bathroom.

“Before this became an issue, nobody knew who I was, nobody cared what bathroom I used,” Adams said. “Most people when they use the bathroom, don’t look twice at who’s in there with them. So, this really wasn’t an issue until the school board made it an issue.”

A lawyer for St. Johns County urged judges to reverse the ruling and uphold the policy restricting students to the bathroom of their at-birth sex, saying the trial court judge overstepped.

“Differences between the sexes are real and it necessitates this kind of separation between the sexes,” lawyer Jeff Slanker told judges. “This has always been the way it’s been done.”

Judge Beverly Martin repeatedly asked Slanker if he could provide any specific complaints that spurred the policy. Slanker could not, saying the school district acted “proactively” to protect students’ privacy interests.

The trial judge rejected this argument, finding that Adams would use a stall and that no breach of privacy would occur.

Borelli told judges the district’s policy would “heap discrimination on transgender students.”

“There is no recognized



Transgender student Drew Adams speaks with reporters outside of the 11th Circuit Court of Appeals on Thursday, Dec. 5, 2019, in Atlanta.

Associated Press

right in the law to not have gender students,” she to share space with trans- argued. □

SC deputy unintentionally shoots mother of suspect

GREER, S.C. (AP) — A sheriff’s deputy in South Carolina unintentionally shot and wounded a shoplifting suspect’s mother during a confrontation inside a home in October, authorities said.

The unidentified deputy was found to have violated department policy governing arrests, Greenville County Sheriff’s Office spokesman Lt. Ryan Flood said in an email. He did not elaborate on how policy was violated.

Flood was quoted by The Greenville News as saying that the deputy’s discipline included counseling and remedial training. He said she was briefly placed on administrative duty but had since been cleared for regular duty.

“This is an effort to ensure the deputy is ready following ... a critical incident,” Flood’s statement said.

The deputy was diagnosed with a concussion and received several bruises as a result of the confrontation, said Greenville County Sheriff’s Office Capt. Tim Brown.

The video shows Kaiser and the deputy involved in a struggle while Kaiser’s mother, whom his lawyer identified as Dianne Maros, is in the room. Maros attempts to hold Kaiser back but he is later seen coming toward the deputy, who then fires her service weapon. The first gunshot strikes Maros.

A second shot fired by the deputy doesn’t hit anyone. □

Paris police arrest scores amid strike over pension reform

By THOMAS ADAMSON

CLAIRE PARKER

Associated Press

PARIS (AP) — Paris police fired tear gas at demonstrators Thursday as the Eiffel Tower shut down, France's high-speed trains came to a standstill and hundreds of thousands marched nationwide in a strike over the government's plan to overhaul the retirement system. At least 90 people were arrested in Paris by evening as the protests wound down.

Police said 65,000 people took to the streets of the French capital, and over 800,000 nationwide in often-tense demonstrations aimed at forcing President Emmanuel Macron to abandon pension reform. The open-ended walkout by the country's unions represents the biggest challenge to Macron since the yellow vest movement against economic inequality erupted a year ago. Opponents fear the changes to how and when workers can retire will threaten the hard-fought French way of life. Macron



A man stands on a traffic light during a demonstration in Paris, Thursday, Dec. 5, 2019.

Associated Press

himself remained "calm and determined" to push it through, according to a top presidential official. In Paris, small groups of masked activists smashed store windows, set fires and hurled flares on the sidelines of a march that was otherwise peaceful. Demonstrators also shot firecrackers at

police in body armor. Some journalists were mugged in the street. The Louvre closed some of its galleries, and the Palace of Versailles shut down. Subway stations across Paris closed their gates, high-speed TGV trains canceled

their runs, and nearly 20% of flights at Paris' Orly Airport were reported grounded. Many visitors, including the U.S. energy secretary, canceled plans to travel to one of the world's most popular tourist destinations. Some travelers showed sup-

port for the striking workers. Others complained about being embroiled in someone else's fight.

"I had no idea about the strike happening, and I was waiting for two hours in the airport for the train to arrive, and it didn't arrive," said vacationer Ian Crossen, from New York. "I feel a little bit frustrated. And I've spent a lot of money. I've spent money I didn't need to, apparently."

Beneath the Eiffel Tower, tourists from Thailand, Canada and Spain echoed those sentiments.

Paris authorities barricaded the presidential palace and deployed 6,000 police officers. Police ordered all businesses, cafes and restaurants in the area to close and detained 71 people before the demonstration even started.

Authorities banned protests in the more sensitive neighborhoods around the Champs-Élysées avenue, the presidential palace, Parliament and Notre Dame Cathedral. □

New Zealand leader discusses abortion, marijuana, monarchy

By NICK PERRY

Associated Press

WELLINGTON, New Zealand

(AP) — During an interview with The Associated Press, New Zealand Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern discussed a range of social issues, including three the nation will make decisions on next year: euthanasia, marijuana use and abortion. But one thing she remained quiet about was her marriage plans.

MARIJUANA: A second referendum measure will determine whether marijuana will be legalized for recreational use. The wording hasn't been finalized yet, but a draft would limit sales to those aged over 20, ban advertising and smoking in public places. It would allow people to grow up to four marijuana plants at home. Ardern declined to say how she'd vote, saying her job was to facilitate a



In this image made from video, New Zealand's Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern speaks during an interview in Wellington, New Zealand, Thursday, Dec. 5, 2019.

Associated Press

discussion on what option would best reduce harm.

ABORTION: Lawmakers are considering changes to abortion laws that would treat the procedure as a health issue rather than a crime.

While abortions have been

available in New Zealand for decades, the procedure is still regulated under the Crimes Act, which many say presents unnecessary obstacles for women seeking abortions.

Ardern said she thought the country was ready for the planned changes, and lawmakers had shown overwhelming support during a preliminary vote.

WOMEN'S ISSUES: Ardern is seen by many women around the world as a role model. She said women still face many issues, depending on where they live.

"One of the greatest challenges in some parts of the world is accessing basic maternal health or even basic education," Ardern said. "For other parts of the world like ours, it will be issues like being free from violence, intimate partner violence, and the gender pay gap." □

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Exterior view of the International Criminal Court, or ICC, in The Hague, Netherlands, Wednesday Dec. 4, 2019.

Associated Press

Prosecution: ICC judges were wrong to reject Afghan probe

By MIKE CORDER
Associated Press

THE HAGUE, Netherlands (AP) — International Criminal Court judges overstepped their powers when they refused to authorize an investigation into allegations of widespread abuses by government forces, the Taliban and U.S. military and intelligence operatives during the Afghanistan conflict, a prosecution lawyer said Thursday.

But a lawyer representing Afghanistan at an ICC appeals hearing countered by saying that Afghanistan opposes an international investigation and should be allowed to prosecute war criminals in its own courts.

The high-stakes hearing at the Hague-based court is focused on a proposed investigation that could for lead the first time to ICC indictments against Americans and help end widespread impunity for crimes in Afghanistan.

However, it is extremely unlikely that, even if the investigation were to go ahead and prosecutors indicted Americans, they would ever appear in court. The United States government is not a member of the ICC and refuses to cooperate with it. After a preliminary probe that lasted more than a decade, the court's Prosecutor, Fatou Bensouda, asked judges in November 2017 to authorize a far-reaching investigation. She said there is informa-

tion that members of the U.S. military and intelligence agencies "committed acts of torture, cruel treatment, outrages upon personal dignity, rape and sexual violence against conflict-related detainees in Afghanistan and other locations, principally in the 2003-2004 period."

She also said that the Taliban and other insurgent groups have killed more than 17,000 civilians since 2009, including some 7,000 targeted killings, and that Afghan security forces are suspected of torturing prisoners at government detention centers.

But in a decision that was condemned by victims' organizations and human rights groups, ICC judges said in April that an investigation would not be in the interests of justice because of a likely lack of cooperation.

Prosecution lawyer Helen Brady told a five-judge panel at Thursday's hearing that the judges who rejected Bensouda's request considered factors that were outside their powers and "gave inadequate consideration to the gravity of crimes and interests of victims."

Rodney Dixon, a lawyer representing Afghanistan, told the hearing that the country opposes the proposed investigation and has set up an international crimes unit to prosecute cases involving insurgents and Afghan security forces in domestic courts. □



CENTRALE BANK VAN ARUBA

POLICY DOCUMENT FOR THE REPORTING OF UNUSUAL TRANSACTIONS BY THE CBA TO THE FIU

1. Introduction

In accordance with article 7(1) of the *Centrale Bankverordening* (AB 1991 no. GT 32), the Centrale Bank van Aruba (CBA) is designated as the circulation bank and is, as such, exclusively entitled to issue florin banknotes.

In connection with the introduction of the 2019 series of florin banknotes, an amendment to the *Landsverordening voorkoming en bestrijding witwassen en terrorismefinanciering* (AB 2011 no. 28) (AML/CFT State Ordinance) entered into force on May 1, 2019.

In the amended AML/CFT State Ordinance, the CBA is granted the authority to report (intended) unusual transactions to the Financial Intelligence Unit of Aruba (FIU-Aruba). The reason for granting this authority is that the Cash Operations & Logistics (COL) department of the CBA may be confronted with (intended) transactions that may indicate money laundering or terrorism financing.

In complying with Article 55a, paragraph 3 of the AML/CFT State Ordinance, the CBA has established guidelines for the application of its authority to report (intended) transactions for which there are reasons to assume that the intended transaction may be related to money laundering or terrorism financing to the FIU-Aruba. The CBA has written them down in a policy document available for the general public.

2. Legal authority of the CBA to report unusual transactions to the FIU-Aruba – Relevant article AML/CFT State Ordinance

Article 55a AML/CFT State Ordinance (unofficial translation):

Article 55a

1. If the Bank, in the performance of its duties as a circulation bank as referred to in Article 7(1) of the Central Bank Ordinance (AB 1991 no. GT 32), carries out a transaction, including an intended transaction, for which there is reason to assume that this may be related to money laundering or terrorism financing, the Bank is authorized to report this to the FIU, if necessary in deviation from the applicable legal confidentiality provisions.
2. With a report as referred to in the first paragraph, the Bank shall provide at least the following information:
 - a. the identity of the client;
 - b. the nature and number of the client's proof of identity;
 - c. the nature, time, and place of the transaction;
 - d. the size and the destination and source of the funds with regard to the transaction involved;
 - e. the circumstances on the basis of which the transaction is considered unusual.
3. The Bank establishes guidelines for the application of the authority referred to in the first paragraph, and records these in a policy document. The policy document shall in any case contain a description of the procedures to be followed in the event of a report, as referred to in the first paragraph, and shall be published, as well as any subsequent changes thereto, in a manner to be determined by the Bank.
4. The Bank shall keep the information referred to in paragraph 2 in an accessible manner for at least ten years after the time of making the report, in a manner to be determined by it.
5. The Bank may, on request or otherwise, provide further data and information to the FIU.

3. Guidelines

The CBA has established the following guidelines to be followed by the COL department of the CBA when (i) banknotes and/or coins are offered for exchange or (ii) florin banknotes and/or commemorative coins/ coin sets/ circulation coins are bought:

a. Identification

To verify the identity of the subject person(s), a valid identity document needs to be presented to the cashier of the CBA. In accordance with *Regeling verificatiedocumenten LWT* (AB 2011 no. 28), the CBA will only accept any of the following documents for identification:

1. Passport;
2. Aruba ID-Card (*cedula*);
3. Aruban Driving License (*rijbewijs*).

The cashier makes a copy of the identity document presented.

b. Source of funds declaration form

For the exchange and/or buying of florin banknotes and/or florin coins with a combined value of Afl. 1,000.00 or more, the subject person(s) is (are) required to fill in the attached source of funds declaration form (see Attachment 1). Name, and address of subject person(s) as well as a description of how the banknotes and/or coins offered for exchange or payment were obtained, need to be disclosed.

c. Additional information

The cashier may request additional information and/or documentation before carrying out the requested transaction(s).

d. Transaction(s) exceeding Afl. 5,000.00

For the exchange or buying of florin banknotes and/or florin coins with a combined value of Afl. 5,000.00 or more, the subject person(s) should send a notification, including a filled-in source of funds declaration form as meant under item 3 b., to the COL department via Cash-VaultDept@cbaruba.org at least 5 days prior to visiting the COL department.

Only upon receipt of a written confirmation with an appointment from the COL department, the subject person(s) may visit the CBA on the proposed day and time for the exchange and/or buying of florin banknotes and/or florin coins with a combined value of Afl. 5,000.00 or more.

e. Reporting to FIU-Aruba

If, according to the CBA, there are reasons to assume that a(n) (intended) transaction may be related to money laundering or terrorism financing, the CBA will report that transaction to the FIU-Aruba.

If the CBA files a report to the FIU-Aruba, it is legally obliged to observe the required confidentiality and, therefore, will not inform the subject person(s) thereof.

f. Rejection of transactions

1. The CBA rejects the transaction in case of insufficient cooperation of the subject person(s) or if the cashier deems the information provided by the subject person(s) insufficient.
2. In the event that partially destroyed or damaged banknotes and/or coins are offered for exchange, the CBA can refuse the exchange or reimburse the subject person(s) depending on the severity of the damage hereof.
3. The CBA rejects the transaction in case it determines after following proper authentication procedures that the banknotes and/or coins are counterfeit and will immediately report the case to the Public Prosecutor's Office and/or (investigative) authorities.
4. In the event that the CBA has reasons to assume that the banknotes and/or coins are related to a criminal offence, it will:
 - a. refuse the transaction; and
 - b. immediately report the case to the Public Prosecutor's Office and/or (investigative) authorities;

all of the foregoing without prejudice to any other rights or remedies.

4. Entry into force

This policy will enter into force on December 5, 2019.

Fears rise as at least 13 stabbed in Baghdad square

SAMYA KULLAB
MURTADA FARAJ
Associated Press

BAGHDAD (AP) — At least 13 people were stabbed Thursday in Baghdad's Tahrir Square, the epicenter of Iraq's protest movement, security and medical officials said, stoking fears of infiltration by unknown groups among anti-government demonstrators. Parliament was scheduled to meet Thursday to amend laws governing compensation to include victims of security operations and vote on changes to the structure of Iraq's electoral commission, the body that oversees polls across the country, according to two lawmakers in attendance.

Over a dozen protesters were attacked with knives by late afternoon, just as demonstrators supportive of political parties and Iran-backed militias withdrew from Tahrir, three anti-government protesters and a witness said. There were no fatalities.

The protesters aligned with parties had marched to Tahrir earlier that day, mostly young men clad in black and waving Iraqi flags. They chanted posi-



Hundreds of people march inside Tahrir Square carrying national flags and chanting religious slogans in Baghdad, Iraq, Thursday, Dec. 5, 2019.

tive slogans in deference to Grand Ayatollah Ali al-Sistani, Iraq's most powerful Shiite cleric, and stood conspicuous against the usual crowds of Tahrir protesters.

Al-Sistani has largely sided with protesters, calling for serious electoral reforms and recently withdrew support for the government of Adil Abdul-Mahdi, prompting his resignation.

At least 400 people have died since the leaderless uprising shook Iraq on Oct. 1, with thousands of Iraqis taking to the streets in Baghdad and the predominantly Shiite southern Iraq decrying corruption, poor services, lack of jobs and calling for an end to the political system that was imposed after the 2003 U.S. invasion.

Security forces dispersed

crowds with live fire, tear gas and sonic bombs, leading to fatalities.

"The parties and militias agreed to bring people to Tahrir under the pretext of maintaining peaceful demonstrations," said Mustafa, a demonstrator who requested anonymity fearing reprisal.

Around 2:30 p.m., the new group of protesters withdrew and left the square.

Immediately after, over a dozen people were stabbed, the officials said. Demonstrators camped out in the square said the number was higher.

The injured were treated inside makeshift medical centers in the square and four with serious wounds were taken to al-Kindi hospital, in east Baghdad, medical officials said.

One police official said six individuals were taken into custody following the attacks.

It was not clear who, if anyone from the withdrawing group of protesters was responsible for the attacks; all wore plain clothes making their affiliations visibly unclear. The perpetrators had blended into the crowds of protesters who have effectively taken up residence in the sprawling plaza, two protesters and a security official said.

But the incident has fueled paranoia among protesters, who are convinced that members of Iran-backed militia groups disguised as demonstrators are to blame for the violence: "They hate the demonstrators and most withdrew." □

Associated Press

Close associates of Israeli PM to be indicted in graft case

By TIA GOLDENBERG
Associated Press

JERUSALEM (AP) — Israel's state prosecutor said Thursday he intends to indict seven men, including close associates of Israeli

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, in a sweeping graft case related to a possible conflict of interest involving a \$2 billion purchase of German submarines.



Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu attends the weekly cabinet meeting at his office in Jerusalem, Israel, Sunday, Dec. 1, 2019.

Associated Press

State prosecutor Shai Nitzan's office said in a statement the seven would be charged with various offenses, among them bribery, money laundering and fraud, pending a hearing. Netanyahu was questioned, but not named as a suspect, in the submarine probe, known as "file 3000." But it roped in some of his closest aides and sparked questions about his earnings on a related German submarine sale to Egypt.

Netanyahu, who was in Lisbon on a state visit, had no comment on the indictments.

Among those to be charged were Netanyahu's personal attorney, David Shimron, who is also his cousin. Shimron repre-

sented the German firm involved and was suspected of using his influence over the prime minister in return for a hefty cut of the deal. Also set to be indicted is David Sharan, who once headed Netanyahu's office. The former head of the navy has also been implicated.

After seeming to escape the submarine scandal, it was revealed that Netanyahu reportedly earned \$4 million on a related German submarine sale to Egypt by owning shares in one of the German manufacturer's suppliers. He has denied wrongdoing.

Netanyahu was recently charged with bribery, fraud and breach of trust in three separate corruption cases in which he is accused of

trading regulatory or legislative favors in exchange for lavish gifts and favorable news coverage. Netanyahu has professed innocence in all three, saying the charges are trumped up by a biased justice system egged on by a liberal media. Netanyahu, Israel's longest-serving leader, is fighting for his political life following two inconclusive elections and the likelihood of an unprecedented third in one year.

With the charges against him issued amid the political impasse, Netanyahu has driven up his rhetoric against his perceived enemies, berating law enforcement institutions and calling for "the investigators to be investigated." □

Moon calls for Chinese role in denuclearizing North Korea

By KIM TONG-HYUNG

Associated Press

SEOUL, South Korea (AP)

— South Korean President Moon Jae-in said Thursday the global diplomatic push to defuse the nuclear standoff with North Korea is at a “critical crossroads” and called for China to continue serving a “positive role” in denuclearizing the Korean Peninsula and stabilizing peace.

Moon made the comments during a meeting with Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi at Seoul’s presidential Blue House. Wang made his first visit in four years amid efforts to patch up relations damaged by South Korea’s deployment of a U.S. anti-missile system China perceives as a security threat.

“The process for the complete denuclearizing of the Korean Peninsula and permanently stabilizing peace is at a critical crossroads,” Moon said. “I would like to ask for continuous support from the Chinese government until the new era of a peaceful and denuclearized Korean Peninsula opens.”



South Korean President Moon Jae-in, right, shakes hands with Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi during a meeting at the presidential Blue House in Seoul, South Korea, Thursday, Dec. 5, 2019.

Associated Press

Wang called for stronger “strategic communication” between Beijing and Seoul and took a jab at the Trump administration, which is locked in trade war with Beijing, saying that international order was being threatened by “unilateralism” and “forcible politics.”

“China and South Korea as neighbors should strengthen

dialogue and cooperation to jointly uphold multilateralism and free trade,” Wang said.

The Blue House said Moon during his meeting with Wang called for stronger bilateral efforts to facilitate tourism between the countries and expressed hope that Chinese President Xi Jinping would visit South Korea at an “early time”

next year.

Wang told Moon that China would continue to play a “constructive role” in the efforts to peacefully resolve the nuclear crisis despite “recent difficulties in the political situation surrounding the Korean Peninsula,” the Blue House said.

Wang on Wednesday met with South Korean Foreign

Minister Kang Kyung-wha and discussed issues related to North Korea and details of a trilateral summit between Seoul, Beijing and Tokyo planned later this month in China. They also discussed facilitating high-level exchanges and arranging a possible visit to South Korea by Chinese President Xi Jinping next year, South Korea’s Foreign Ministry said.

His visit comes after years of tensions over the U.S. Terminal High Altitude Area Defense, or THAAD, system placed in southern South Korea and amid concerns that a U.S.-led diplomatic push to resolve a nuclear standoff with North Korea is beginning to fall apart over disagreements in exchanging sanctions relief and disarmament.

With the talks faltering, North Korean leader Kim Jong Un has intensified his missile testing activity while issuing an end-of-year deadline for the Trump administration to offer mutually acceptable terms for a deal to salvage the diplomacy. □



Russian President Vladimir Putin speaks during the International Volunteer Forum at the Olympic Park in Sochi, Russia, Dec. 5, 2019.

Associated Press

Putin offers US to extend key nuclear pact right now

Associated Press

MOSCOW (AP) — Russian President Vladimir Putin said Thursday that Moscow is prepared to immediately extend the only remaining nuclear arms reduction pact with the United States.

Speaking at a meeting with military officials, Putin said that Russia has repeatedly offered the U.S. to extend the New START treaty that expires in 2021 but that it hasn’t heard back.

“Russia is ready to extend the New START treaty immediately, before the year’s end and without any preconditions,” he said. □

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Northern Mexico fears return to dark past after gunfights

By **MARIA VERZA**

Associated Press

VILLA UNION, Mexico (AP)

— Mexico's president says he wants to fight drug cartels with "hugs, not bullets," but after 23 people were killed in a weekend gun-battle in the border state of Coahuila, some communities want a more forceful strategy to prevent cartel assailants from reimposing a reign of terror.

Residents of the small town of Villa Union said Tuesday that they fear a return to the days of 2010-2013, when the old Zetas cartel killed, burned and abducted Coahuila citizens. This past weekend, the Cartel del Noreste — an offshoot of the Zetas — invaded Villa Union to try to reassert a claim to the turf.

Villa Union is 12 miles (20 kilometers) from the town of Allende, the site of a 2011 massacre in which the Zetas killed at least 70 people. Residents said they have learned from experience that the Zetas must be fought.

"You can't give a drug trafficker a hug and not expect to receive a bullet in return," said a former policeman in Allende who would not give his name for fear of reprisals. "That is the only way to fight them off, to prevent them from returning to our towns and ruling them, is with bullets." The ex-policeman and his family had to flee Allende



A former policeman walks through an abandoned home, torched by the Zetas cartel eight years back, in Allende, Coahuila state, Mexico, Tuesday, Dec. 3, 2019.

Associated Press

for a while in 2011 in the face of Zeta threats. He doesn't want to have to flee again. Many others expressed similar fears.

Sandra Zedillo, a municipal employee in Villa Union, said "it doesn't look good. We are afraid they will return." The atmosphere of dread was underscored by the funeral procession held Tuesday for a local firefighter who was abducted and killed by the gang.

"This hurts," a rancher said. "The firefighter paid for something that he didn't have any part in."

Another resident who asked that his name not be

used, said old fears were stirred up by the weekend invasion in which dozens of Cartel de Noreste pickup trucks shot up the town hall, killed two municipal workers and four state police officers, before battling soldiers and police and fleeing. Some of the suspected gunmen were later arrested and described the incursion as a hit-and-run operation aimed at staking a claim to the territory for use as a drug-trafficking route to the U.S. border. But many thought the gang wanted to rule the border area, not just use its routes. "This is going to get worse,"

said the man, who lived through the previous round of violence. "This is what happened with the Zetas. They said they wouldn't stay, but they stayed."

For his part, Coahuila Gov. Miguel Riquelme is planning to fight the cartel's move into the state. The Cartel del Noreste, like the Zetas, is based in the border city of Nuevo Laredo, across from Laredo, Texas, to the east. Nuevo Laredo is in Tamaulipas state.

"This isn't a question of issuing a challenge to the criminal groups," Riquelme said following a meeting with army officers in Villa Union.

"It is about protecting the civilian population."

Riquelme announced plans to set up at least three military posts with about 40 soldiers apiece and said more would be added if necessary. He said with apparent satisfaction that some of the 10 suspects detained in the weekend attack — several of whom are adolescents — said they had been forced into participating, and said they feared the Coahuila state police.

While President Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador wants to avoid confrontations with drug cartels, they appear unavoidable.

And although the president claims the policy of detaining drug lords and the 2006-2012 government offensive against the cartels were failures, those initiatives weakened the Zetas and reduced violence in some parts of the border states of Coahuila, Nuevo Leon and Tamaulipas.

Now locals fear the cartels may be resurgent. Some long for the days when Mexican marines successfully patrolled the area until Lopez Obrador reassigned them to other duties. They were known for not getting corrupted by the cartels and not yielding in battle with them. "The marines are the only ones I trust," said one local mechanic. "The rest are going to take a bribe." □

Rights group: Venezuela migrant kids left at risk in Brazil

Associated Press

CARACAS, Venezuela

(AP) — Hundreds of Venezuelan children are fleeing into Brazil alone and at risk of becoming homeless, abused or recruited by gangs, Human Rights Watch said Thursday.

The human rights group cited government figures indicating that over 500 children have crossed into the Brazilian state of Roraima since May.

Ninety percent of the Venezuelan children were between 13 and 17 and traveled alone or with an adult who was not a relative or



In this Feb. 23, 2019 file photo, Venezuelans stand behind the Spanish sign: "Venezuela-Brazil Limit" near a border checkpoint in Pacaraima, Roraima state, Brazil, on Venezuela's southern border.

Associated Press

legal guardian. Many were fleeing hunger, looking for healthcare to treat serious

ailments or trying to find work in Brazil.

"The humanitarian emer-

gency is driving children to flee Venezuela alone," said César Muñoz, senior Brazil researcher at Human Rights Watch. An estimated 4.6 million Venezuelans have fled their country's economic and political turmoil, a figure that the United Nations believes could reach 6.5 million by the end of 2020, making it one of the largest mass migrations on the planet today.

More than 224,000 have fled to Brazil, where many remain in the border state of Roraima because of its relative isolation from the rest of the country. Human

Rights Watch found that many of the shelters there are overcrowded, meaning children often end up living on the streets and unable to access government services.

One 16-year-old boy was found choked to death in October, his body left in a plastic bag.

"While Brazilian authorities are making a great effort to accommodate hundreds of Venezuelans crossing daily into Brazil, they are failing to give these children the protection they desperately need," Muñoz said. □

LOCAL



Dinner Concert with the incomparable guitarist Luis Quintero



PALM BEACH — Luis Quintero, the internationally famous Venezuelan guitarist who just recently played here before he went on a tour in Mexico, has been coming to play in Aruba regularly since 2005 and has developed a profound love for our island and its people. When approached to play in a benefit concert to raise funds for the 2020 Aruba Symphony Festival he graciously offered to play for free, yes, for free!

The Aruba Symphony Festival and Academy is an international event where every year in July/August, first-class musicians from around the globe make Aruba their destination. During these 12 intensive days of music-making, guest artists and students from more than 15 countries give the happy island an unforgettable experience with full-house concerts, workshops, conferences and classes led by celebrated international artists. Most of these concerts are FREE and the organization would like to keep it that way to be accessible for all.

The concert takes place on December 14 starting at 7 pm to open a gourmet dinner at the amazing Azure Beach Residences where our famous Aruban chef Urvin Croes will be in charge of the gastronomic part of the program. Chef Urvin is donating his talent and fame to the cause. Azure Beach Residences also is donating the use of its facilities. With a gift of buying tickets for this dinner you support the 2020 Aruba Symphony Festival and you will be served all you care to eat and all the wine, soft drinks and water you want to drink. We cordially invite you to join us at this unique event.

Maestro Luis Quintero is helping. Chef Irvin Croes is helping. Azure Beach Residences is helping. Many people and organizations are helping. We invite YOU to help the 2020 Aruba Symphony Festival by attending this concert. Do not miss this unique opportunity. □

Tickets to participate in the gourmet dinner concert are obtainable at Azure Beach Residences, J.E. Irausquin Boulevard #260, or call us at 525-3600. You may also contact Clyde Harms at +297 738-8843 or at clydeharms@yahoo.com; Johnny Croes at johnnycroes62@gmail.com and cell number +297 592-3762; and Jontsje Tilma at jonnetilma@yahoo.com and cell nr. +297 594-9999.



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Harbour House Aruba: The unique dimension of urban-beach



ORANJESTAD — Take a look at this cool site reflecting best of two worlds: beach and city. Harbour House Aruba offers cosmopolitan living in a beach-chic environment. The residence is fast-selling their studios, two-bedroom and three-bedroom units for many reasons but in a nutshell we can name: great location, great value for your money and great quality. Let's show you more.

We have 94 units in the former 7-level Marazul building at the historical location of Paardenbaai. Harbour House Aruba is the ultimate smart investment or personal living space. Marinelda Cartaya, Sales Manager, couldn't be happier about the sales process. "We sold 70 % already which is exciting. Both visitors and locals love this unique concept." She explains that the construction development is at a rapid pace which is great because buyers can see the lay out, materials and progress. "Improvement is visible. The pool is constructed and every floor is in a different phase. The stairs to the Jacuzzi's at the top floor are ready and in terms of the indoor finishes, we can display tiling, windows, sliding glass floors." Only two studios, some two bedroom units and three bedroom units are still available and the sales office has visitors on a daily basis. City elegance combined with tropical tranquility is what you get here. The panoramas are breath-taking. Can you imagine yourself with your favorite cup of joe, gazing out over the ocean while the city of Oranjestad is awakening?



For those waiting to see the progress of the project, just check out the website. It will show you updates on construction including images. Marinelda: "When you live abroad stopping by to check upon your purchase is not that simple, yet with the monthly updates on our website, it is a lot easier. When in Aruba or intending to visit, contact us, schedule an appointment and you can personally see on site what we are offering." The ground level of the building will provide a gallery of restaurants, art gallery, stores, and supermarket. A parking lot will be assigned to the owners and visitors. "If we continue like this, the intended deadline of June 2020 will be achieved," says Marinelda.

Connecting Vibe

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Make sure you are at Bugaloe to show your fancy dancing skills on the new dance floor this weekend! They are waiting for you! Don't forget their regular Happy Hours with live entertainment from 5-6pm, and again from 10-11pm. See you, December 8th!

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PALM BEACH — Recently, Kimberley Richardson of the Aruba Tourism Authority had the great pleasure to honor Aruba's loyal and friendly visitors as Goodwill Ambassadors of Aruba. The Goodwill Ambassador certificate is presented on behalf of the Minister of Tourism, as a token of appreciation to the guests who visit Aruba 20 years and more consecutively.

The honorees were couple Victor & Mandy Muliyl visiting for 20 years, together with couple Raymond and Josephine Timmons visiting for 30 years. In five more years, Mr. and Mrs. Timmons will be entitled to receive the Emerald Ambassador certificate. The Emerald Ambassador certificate is the highest certificate that we present, and is given to visitors who have been visiting Aruba 35 years or more consecutively.

This lovely group of people stated that they love the island very much, especially for its year-round sunny weather, nice sandy beaches and picturesque sunsets, delicious variety of foods, its cleanliness, and Aruba's warm and friendly people whom became like family to them.

Richardson together with the representatives of the Playa Linda Beach Resort presented the certificates to the honorees, handed over some presents and also thanked them for choosing Aruba as their favorite vacation destination and as their home-away-from-home. □

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The Government of Aruba officially announces that the import, production and selling of plastic, oxybenzone and styrofoam are forbidden per January 1st, 2019. Sanctions will apply from January 1st, 2020.

SPORTS



Team owner Joe Gibbs, left, speaks after being given the Bill France Award of Excellence at the NASCAR Cup Series Awards on Thursday, Dec. 5, 2019, in Nashville, Tenn.

Associated Press

Joe Gibbs honored with NASCAR's award of excellence

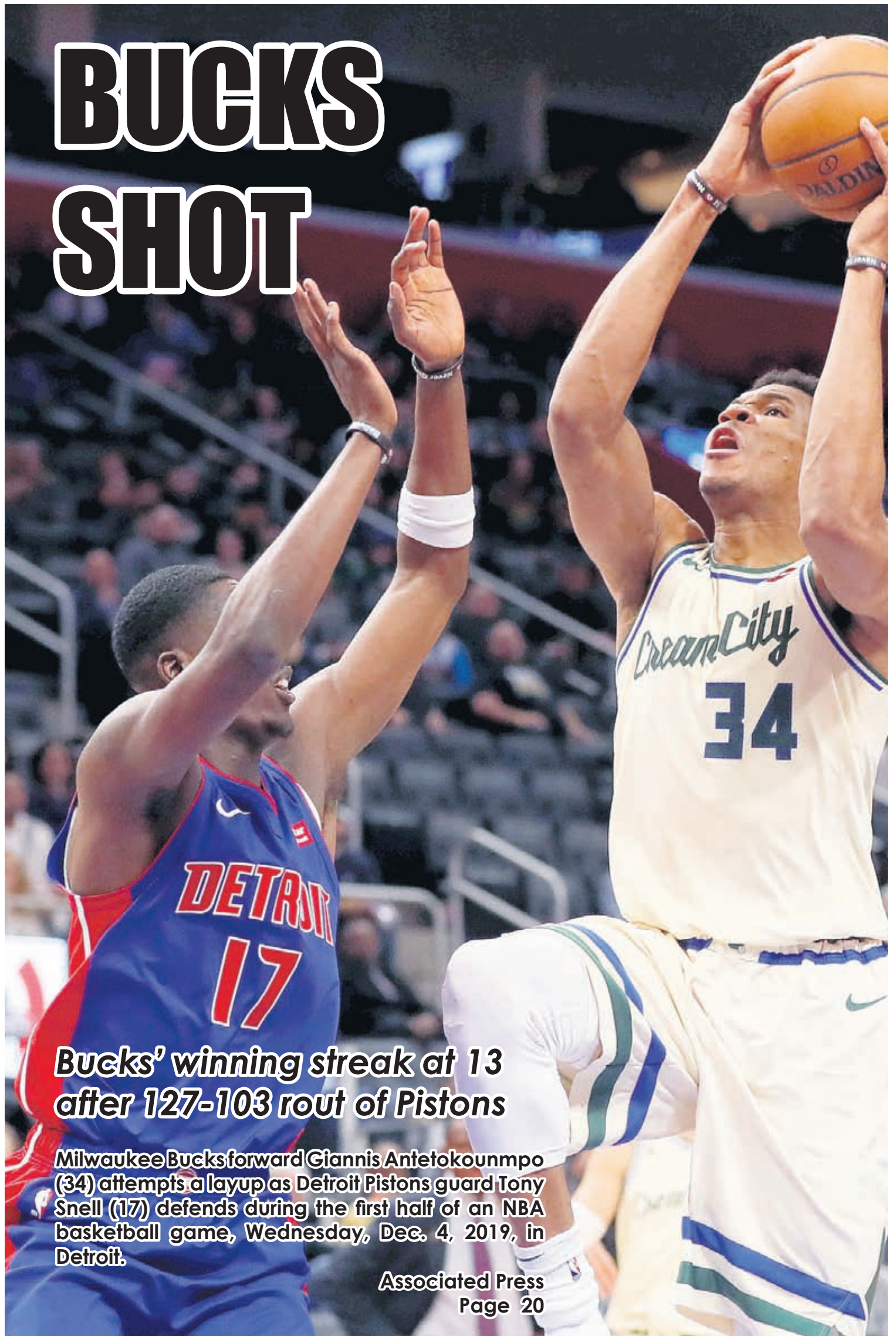
JENNA FRYER

AP Auto Racing Writer

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (AP) —

Joe Gibbs was honored with the Bill France Award of Excellence, capping a year in which he was elected to NASCAR's Hall of Fame, won his fifth Cup championship as a car owner and thoroughly dominated the competition. Gibbs was surprised with the honor, given at the start of Thursday night's season-ending awards ceremony. "Our family, we just appreciate everything about this sport," Gibbs said. "We were worried about coming into NASCAR, and we were welcomed in. It's a thrill for us." The award named for NASCAR's late founder is not given every year. Dale Earnhardt Jr. was the last recipient in 2017 and it was not awarded last year. There have been only 26 winners since the award began in 1965. Gibbs received the award from Ben Kennedy, the great-grandson of its namesake. □

BUCKS SHOT



Bucks' winning streak at 13 after 127-103 rout of Pistons

Milwaukee Bucks forward Giannis Antetokounmpo (34) attempts a layup as Detroit Pistons guard Tony Snell (17) defends during the first half of an NBA basketball game, Wednesday, Dec. 4, 2019, in Detroit.

Associated Press
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Reed builds 3-shot lead in Bahamas as Tiger rallies

By DOUG FERGUSON

AP Golf Writer

NASSAU, Bahamas (AP) —

A tropical breeze replaced the raging wind and made golf a lot easier for Patrick Reed, Tiger Woods and just about everyone else Thursday in the Hero World Challenge. Reed took advantage of the back nine at Albany Golf Club for the second straight day. He was tied for the lead until making six birdies over his last 10 holes for a 6-under 66 that gave him a three-shot lead over U.S. Open champion Gary Woodland.

"It's one of those golf courses that when the wind lays down, it gives you opportunities to make birdies," Reed said. "But when the wind starts blowing, the golf course can get really challenging. You need to give yourself as many opportunities as you can."

Reed was at 12-under 132. Woods, playing for the first time since he won in Japan for his record-tying 82nd career victory on the PGA Tour, kept a clean card to match Reed's 66 and remain six shots behind. Unlike the opening round, when Woods started poorly and ended even worse to wipe out a good back nine, he played bogey-free and made up ground on the back nine.

It started with a 6-iron that hopped onto the green at the par-5 11th and rolled 7 feet away for an eagle. He followed with a 7-iron to 8 feet for another birdie. He didn't make up any ground on Reed, but he at least cut down on the number of players ahead of him as he



Tiger Woods tees off at the 10th hole of Albany Golf Club as Bubba Watson and his caddy look during the second round of the Hero World Challenge in Nassau, Bahamas, Thursday Dec. 5 2019.

Associated Press

tries to win his holiday event for the first time since 2011. "I just think it was less windy," Woods said. "It was a little bit easier today."

Once he got through the front nine, where he spent much of the time scrambling for pars outside of a lone birdie, Woods didn't miss too many shots coming in. A week before he heads over to Australia as the playing captain for the U.S. team in the Presidents Cup, the game looked to be in order.

Woods attributed that to the minor knee surgery in late August to repair cartilage damage.

"I can drive the ball a little

better because I can rotate, and I can putt the ball better because I can get down and read putts again," Woods said. "Toward the end of the year, I couldn't do that."

Woodland, who makes his Presidents Cup debut next week, lost ground with consecutive bogeys that left him six shots behind at one point. He fixed that by finishing with three straight birdies for a 69 and will be paired with Reed again on Friday for the third round.

The tournament ends Saturday so the American team can board a charter to Melbourne, arriving on Monday. Dustin Johnson,

who withdrew from the Bahamas to have one more week for his knee to recover, plans to fly in on Saturday to join the rest of the Americans on the charter. Defending champion Jon Rahm also had a 66 to match the low round of the day, leaving him four shots behind with Henrik Stenson, who had a 67.

Woods was in the group at 6-under 138 along with Rickie Fowler and Justin Thomas, who each shot 69. Fowler, who got married during his offseason and then missed a tournament recovering from food poisoning, is playing for the first time since the Tour Cham-

pionship on Aug. 25.

All but three players broke par, and the high score belonged to Bubba Watson and Chez Reavie at 73.

Reed is playing this week with a set of prototype irons he has been working on, and he's keeping it private until the new year. Golf Channel reported earlier this week that the company was Japan-based Grindworks. He also has a new putter.

They appear to be working, especially at the end. Coming off a bogey, Reed drilled his approach from 201 yards into 3 feet on the final hole for a birdie to stretch his lead. □

MLS teams no longer will play every opponent each season

NEW YORK (AP) — Major League Soccer is breaking away from soccer's tradition of having each team play every opponent in its league. MLS is expanding to 26 teams in 2020 with the additions of Miami and Nashville but will keep a 34-game regular-season schedule. A team will play each of its 12 conference opponents home and away, and will face only 10 of the 13 teams in the oth-

er conference. Nashville opens Feb. 29 at home against Atlanta and David Beckham's Inter Miami starts March 1 at Los Angeles, the league said Thursday in announcing all home openers. Defending champion Seattle opens March 1 against Chicago.

Other Feb. 29 openers are Colorado at D.C., New England at Montreal, LA Galaxy at Houston, Toronto at San Jose, Philadelphia

at Dallas, Salt Lake at Orlando and Kansas City at Vancouver. Games the following day include New York City at Columbus, Cincinnati at New York Red Bulls and Minnesota at Portland.

Home openers on March 7 are Chicago at New England, Red Bulls at Salt Lake, NYC at Toronto, Cincinnati at Atlanta, Houston at Kansas City, Orlando at Colorado and Vancouver at LA Galaxy.

Four more home openers are set for March 14: Dallas at NYC, LA Galaxy at Miami, D.C. at Cincinnati and San Jose at Philadelphia. The final home openers are Red Bulls at Minnesota on March 15 and Atlanta at Chicago on March 21 as the Fire return downtown to Soldier Field, their home from 1997-2005. The played in suburban Bridgeview from 2006 through last season. □

Nichushkin, Avalanche beat Maple Leafs 3-1

TORONTO (AP) — Valeri Nichushkin scored a short-handed goal in the third period, lifting the Colorado Avalanche to a 3-1 win over the Toronto Maple Leafs on Wednesday night. Nathan MacKinnon had a goal and an assist, Joonas Donskoi also scored and Philipp Grubauer stopped 38 shots for the Avalanche. Zach Hyman scored for Toronto and Frederik Andersen, starting on consecutive nights for the first time since January 2017, had 27 saves. With his team on the power play, Toronto center Jason Spezza's stick shattered on a shot and as he tried to keep the puck in with his feet at the blue line, he got caught up with teammate Morgan Rielly.

That allowed Nichushkin to move in all alone and bury his third goal of the season upstairs at 6:40 to put Colorado up 2-1.

Toronto, which had Mitch Marner back after he missed 11 games with a high ankle sprain, pushed as the period wore on and pressed late, but couldn't get anything past Grubauer with Andersen on the bench before Donskoi iced it into an empty net with 79 seconds left.

PENGUINS 3, BLUES 0
PITTSBURGH (AP) — Stefan Noesen celebrated his return to the NHL with his first goal of the season and banged-up Pittsburgh handed St. Louis its first regulation loss on the road since before Halloween. Noesen, a five-year veteran who signed a minor-league deal with the Penguins in the offseason, pounded home a rebound off Jared McCann's shot with 39 seconds left in the second period for his first goal since last March when he played for New Jersey. Teddy Blueger scored 39 seconds into the game to give the Penguins the early lead and Alex Galchenyuk got his second of the season early in the third period.

Tristan Jarry stopped 28 shots to post his third ca-

reer shutout as.

Jordan Binnington finished with 30 saves for St. Louis, but the Blues saw their 10-game road point streak end.

SENATORS 5, OILERS 2

EDMONTON, Alberta (AP) — Tyler Ennis had a goal and two assists to help Ottawa snap a five-game skid.

Artem Anisimov, Connor Brown, Anthony Duclair and Vladislav Namestnikov also scored for the Senators.

Craig Anderson, returning from a lower-body injury, stopped 24 shots.

Jujhar Khaira and Oscar Klefbom had goals for the Oilers, losers of three of their last four.

Mikko Koskinen gave up three goals on 12 shots before leaving in the second period. Mike Smith finished with 11 saves.

CAPITALS 3, KINGS 1

LOS ANGELES (AP) — John Carlson scored twice, Ilya Samsonov stopped 22 shots and Washington beat Los Angeles.

Tom Wilson also had a goal as the Capitals have won five in a row for the second time this season.

They won six straight Oct. 25-Nov. 9.

Blake Lizotte had a goal and Jonathan Quick made 19 saves for the Kings, who lost for the third time in their past 10 home games. □



Colorado Avalanche right wing Valeri Nichushkin (13) celebrates his goal on Toronto Maple Leafs goaltender Frederik Andersen (31) during the third period of an NHL hockey game, Wednesday, Dec. 4, 2019 in Toronto.

Associated Press

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Located at Riu Antillas as formerly The Westin Resort.

Antetokounmpo scores 35 points, Bucks win 13th straight

By The Associated Press

DETROIT (AP) — Giannis Antetokounmpo scored 35 points to lift the Milwaukee Bucks to their 13th consecutive victory, 127-103 over the Detroit Pistons on Wednesday night. The last time the Bucks had a longer winning streak than this was when they won 16 in a row spanning the end of the 1972-73 season and the beginning of 1973-74. They also had a 13-game run shortly after that 16-game streak ended. Milwaukee had won its previous two games by 41 and 44 points, and the Pistons had won their previous two by 34 and 33. This one wasn't close, either. The Bucks have dominated Detroit of late. Milwaukee won all eight matchups with the Pistons last season — four in the regular season and four in the first round of the play-offs. The Bucks also beat Detroit last month in their first meeting of 2019-20. Andre Drummond had 23 points and 14 rebounds for Detroit.

LAKERS 121, JAZZ 96

SALT LAKE CITY (AP) — Anthony Davis scored 26 points, LeBron James had 20 points and 12 assists and Los Angeles routed Utah. Rajon Rondo added 14 points and a season-high 12 assists and season-high nine rebounds. Los Angeles cruised to an easy victory, outscoring Utah 32-5 in fast-break points and totaling 21 points off 19 Jazz turnovers.

Donovan Mitchell scored 29 points and Bojan Bogdanovic added 23 to lead Utah. The Jazz lost for the fifth time in six games.

MAVERICKS 121, TIMBERWOLVES 114

DALLAS (AP) — Dwight Powell had 24 points on 9-for-9 shooting from the



Detroit Pistons guard Derrick Rose (25) passes as Milwaukee Bucks center Brook Lopez (11) defends during the second half of an NBA basketball game, Wednesday, Dec. 4, 2019, in Detroit.

Associated Press

field, Jalen Brunson ignited a fourth-quarter rally with 14 of his 16 points in the period and Dallas beat Minnesota.

Powell and Brunson both had season highs as the Mavericks overcame a sub-par outing by Luka Doncic to win for the ninth time in 10 games. Doncic finished with 22 points, seven rebounds and six assists after picking up a technical foul in the third quarter and seeing his team rally with most of its starters on the bench. Karl-Anthony Towns and Andrew Wiggins had 26 points apiece for Minnesota.

CELTICS 112, HEAT 93

BOSTON (AP) — Jaylen Brown scored a season-high 31 points, Kemba Walker had 28 and Boston beat Miami to improve to 8-0 at home.

Brown connected on a season-high five 3-pointers, and Walker had seven assists and four rebounds. Jayson Tatum added 19 points.

Jimmy Butler led Miami with a season-high 37 points and had six rebounds and four assists. Heat coach Erik

Spoelstra left the team in the morning, flying home to be with wife Nikki for the birth of their second son. Assistant coach Dan Craig ran the team. **HORNETS 106, WARRIORS 91**

CHARLOTTE, N.C. (AP) — Devonte Graham made 10 3-pointers and scored 33 points and Charlotte beat Golden State to spoil D'Angelo Russell's return to the court. Graham was 10 of 16 from beyond the arc and also had nine assists and had seven rebounds. Backcourt mate Terry Rozier added 25 points, seven assists and seven rebounds. Russell finished with 18 points on 7-of-13 shooting in 25 minutes after missing the last nine games with a right thumb sprain.

NETS 130, HAWKS 118

ATLANTA (AP) — Garrett Temple scored a season-high 27 points, Spencer Dinwiddie had 18 of his 24 in the second half and Brooklyn beat Atlanta.

Taurean Prince finished with 23 points against his former team, and Jarrett Allen had 20 for the Nets, who were coming off a three-point home loss Sunday to Miami

but have won six of eight. Kyrie Irving missed his 10th straight game with a right shoulder impingement and did not make the two-game trip to stay home and rehab.

Trae Young scored 39 points and rookie Cam Reddish had a career-high 25 for Atlanta. The Hawks have lost 11 of 12.

TRAIL BLAZERS 127, KINGS 116

PORTLAND, Ore. (AP) — CJ McCollum scored 33 points and Portland Trail Blazers pulled away in the final quarter to beat the Sacramento Kings 127-116 on Wednesday night.

Hassan Whiteside added 22 points and 16 rebounds, as well as a career-high seven assists. Damian Lillard had 24 points and 10 assists in Portland's third straight home victory.

Carmelo Anthony finished with 20 points, his fourth game with 20 or more in seven games with the Blazers.

Richaun Holmes had 28 points and 10 rebounds for the Kings.

MAGIC 128, SUNS 114

ORLANDO, Fla. (AP) — Aaron Gordon scored a

season-high 32 points, Terrence Ross had 22 and Orlando beat Phoenix.

Evan Fournier added 21 points, and Markelle Fultz had 13 points, five assists and four rebounds for the Magic. Frank Kaminsky led the Suns with 23 points and five rebounds, and Devin Booker had 17 points and five assists.

PACERS 107, THUNDER 100

OKLAHOMA CITY (AP) — T.J. Warren scored 24 points to help Indiana beat Oklahoma City.

Domantas Sabonis added 17 points and 13 rebounds for the Pacers. They have won seven of eight.

Steven Adams scored 20 points on 8-for-8 shooting and Danilo Gallinari and Dennis Schroder each added 18 points for the Thunder.

BULLS 106, GRIZZLIES 99

CHICAGO (AP) — Zach LaVine scored 25 points, Wendell Carter Jr. had 16 points and 13 rebounds and Chicago held off Memphis. Lauri Markkanen added 15 points for the Bulls.

Jonas Valanciunas had 32 points and 13 rebounds for Memphis. □





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Reds, Moustakas complete \$64 million, 4-year deal

By JOE KAY
AP Sports Writer

CINCINNATI (AP) — Mike Moustakas watched the Reds from the visiting dug-out and saw a team on the rise. He decided to become a key part in the franchise's attempt to become a winner again.

The All-Star infielder completed a \$64 million, four-year contract with Cincinnati on Thursday, the biggest free agent deal in franchise history.

They agreed to the deal earlier in the week. Moustakas was in town to sign it and get introduced at the team's annual fan festival this weekend.

"Being on the other side, playing in Milwaukee, I was able to see what these guys had and what they were bringing to the table," Moustakas said after pulling on a No. 9 Reds uniform. "I want to make this team a little better and get to the postseason. The most addictive thing is postseason baseball."

Moustakas becomes the second-highest paid player on the roster behind Joey Votto, who makes \$25 million each of the next four seasons. Moustakas gets \$12 million next year, \$14 million in 2021, \$16 million in 2022 and \$18 million in 2023. Cincinnati has a \$20 million option for 2024 with a \$4 million buyout.

Moustakas has a \$250,000 bonus for winning an MVP award, \$200,000 for finishing second and \$150,000 for third. He would receive \$100,000 for winning a Gold Glove, and \$75,000 apiece for becoming an All-Star or winning a Silver Slugger.

He will donate 1% of his base salary to the Reds' charity.

The Reds have become active in free agency the last two years, trying to escape

a rut of six straight losing seasons. Moustakas, 31, will

season and made the All-Star team for the third time.

75-87 mark, and wasted a lot of solid pitching along

"The guy's a winner," manager David Bell said. "He's motivated by winning. There's an edge that he brings with that."

"We're so close and we have other players and a team full of guys that want to make that happen."

To get a guy that's done it before played in the postseason and won championships and is truly motivated to not only be the best but motivate other players, that's going to add so much to our team."

It's Moustakas' third stop in three years. He rejected a \$17.4 million qualifying offer from Kansas City after the 2017 season but eventually returned to the Royals on a one-year deal.

He was traded to the Brewers that July and finished with a .251 batting average, 28 homers and 95 RBIs. He had a \$7 million salary this year and gets a \$3 million buyout for declining his \$10 million option.

He's made \$18.7 million on a pair of one-year deals the last two seasons. □



In this May 24, 2019, file photo, Milwaukee Brewers' Mike Moustakas hits an RBI-double during the first inning of a baseball game against the Philadelphia Phillies, in Milwaukee.

Associated Press

plug the Reds' hole at second base, which opened when Scooter Gennett got hurt and then was traded at midseason.

"He brings out the best in all around him," said Dick Williams, president of baseball operations. "We set off this offseason thinking about ways to upgrade our offense, and I think having Mike swing the bat in the lineup somewhere is going to really shake things up." Cincinnati scored the fourth-fewest runs in the NL last season despite one of the league's most hitter-friendly ballparks.

Bulking up on offense is their top priority in the offseason. "Mike is a proven performer on winning teams, and we are excited to add his power and experience to our roster," Reds owner Bob Castellini said.

Moustakas hit .254 with 35 homers and 87 RBIs last

He has 42 games of playoff experience with the Royals from 2014-15 and the Brewers the last two seasons, which was attractive to a Reds team trying to get back to the postseason.

The Reds haven't been to the playoffs since 2012, when they won 90 games and lost to the Pirates in the NL wild-card game. Cincinnati then launched into a rebuild, trading away stars for prospects.

The team lost at least 94 games annually from 2015-18.

The Reds decided to try to become competitive again last season and acquired Yasiel Puig, Matt Kemp, Alex Wood, Tanner Roark and Sonny Gray, who became an All-Star. Puig, Kemp and Roark were dealt during the season. Cincinnati finally escaped last place, finishing ahead of Pittsburgh with a

the way.

Moustakas' playoff experience was attractive to Cincinnati. □

Pair of South Korean players made available to MLB teams

NEW YORK (AP) — NEW YORK — Two 31-year-old players from the South Korean League have been posted by their clubs and made available to major league teams. Negotiations may start Friday with left-hander Kwang-Hyun Kim of the SK Wyverns and outfielder Jae-Hwan Kim of the Doosan Bears, the commissioner's said Thursday. A deal must be reached by Jan. 5 at 5 p.m.

Kwang-Hyun Kim was 17-6 with a 2.51 ERA in 30 starts and one relief appearance last season. He has 136-77 record with a 3.27 ERA in 12 seasons with the Wyverns.

Jae-Hwan Kim hit .283 with 15 homers and 92 RBIs, down from career bests of 44 homers and 133 RBIs in 2018. He has a .307 average with 144 homers and 507 RBIs in nine years with the Bears.

An MLB team would pay a South Korean club a fee of 20% of guaranteed money in a major league contract through \$25 million, plus 17.5% above that through \$50 million, plus 15% over that. A supplemental fee would equal 15% of any earned bonuses, escalators and compensation from option years that are exercised or become guaranteed. □

New dawn for boxing as Ruiz, Joshua set for Saudi rematch

By **STEVE DOUGLAS**
AP Sports Writer

The thick, sparkling ring on his right hand and the diamond-studded watch around his left wrist were indications of just how much life has changed for Andy Ruiz Jr. since he became world heavyweight champion.

It was another part of his attire that really stood out, however, when the portly Mexican came face to face with Anthony Joshua for one of the last times before their title rematch in Saudi Arabia on Saturday. For the final news conference ahead of the fight, Ruiz chose to wear a New York Knicks jersey — yet another reminder to Joshua of that fateful night at Madison Square Garden in June when he lost his three heavyweight belts in one of boxing's biggest shocks in years.

"That's where I got the first victory on June 1 and that's why I brought it," Ruiz said, referring to his jersey. "I wore it to remind myself, 'I'm the champ.'"

And Ruiz has really made the most of his new status over the last five months. One of his first acts was to buy a car for his mother, Felicitas, and he also showed off his lavish new home in California, replete with its fountain and pool, on his social media accounts. He had an audience with Mexico's president, Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador, and threw the ceremonial first pitch at a Los Angeles Dodgers game.

Basically doing things he could never have imagined when he used to mix cement for his father, Andres, as a youngster and, as recently as 2017, went a whole year without even fighting following a loss to Joseph Parker in his only previous world title bout. He was disregarded as a potential champion then, mocked for his flabby frame even though his fast hands and skills pointed to a boxer with talent.

Ruiz is at pains to point out, though, that he is simply enjoying his life and not taking his eye off the ball —

something Joshua says he did before the first fight.

"There's no way I'm going to let these belts go," Ruiz said, looking at the WBO, WBA and IBF straps in front

cue his career after being knocked down four times before the seventh-round stoppage in New York.

The first ever heavyweight title fight in the Middle

He says he is likely to weigh in on Friday at about 238 pounds (108 kilograms), which would be the lightest he has fought since 2014, and has been con-

adding that he "didn't lose heart or any fire in my belly" after getting beaten by Ruiz for the first loss of his professional career.

"There's no fear in my heart, no fear in my mind," he said. "I was asked if this would be a special moment (to regain his belts). I said, 'No.' I know I belong there. It's not special. When I regain those belts, I'm probably just going to keep cool and stay focused. It's not a time to celebrate."

The fight will take place in the Diriyah Arena, a purpose-built venue with a capacity of 15,000 spectators that has been built in six weeks and will be taken down within two days of the bout.

No stranger to hyperbole, Joshua's ambitious promoter, Eddie Hearn, is comparing the occasion to the "Rumble in the Jungle" and the "Thrilla in Manila" — two famous heavyweight fights from the 1970s which were held in unlikely global locations. And he is calling it a "new dawn for the sport of boxing," predicting many more high-profile fights in this part of the world. With Joshua earning as much as a reported \$70 million and Ruiz reportedly \$10 million, the attraction for fighters is obvious.

Joshua isn't sure what type of atmosphere he'll be fighting in, although it is unlikely to be anything like the raucous occasions he is used to in Britain. Not that he cares, given the precarious situation his career is in. "I'm not here to put on a show," Joshua said, sounding all business. "I'm here to win."

Ruiz, reveling in his status as the first fighter of Mexican descent to win a heavyweight title, has no intention of letting that happen.

"I know AJ's going to come with a different game plan, I know he is prepared and motivated," he said. "That's what gives me the motivation, the edge to be more cautious. I know he lost weight, is going to try to box me around. It's my job to prevent that. I'm ready for whatever comes my way." □



In this Saturday, June 1, 2019 file photo, Mexican American Andy Ruiz celebrates after stopping Britain's Anthony Joshua during the seventh round of a heavyweight championship boxing match in New York.

Associated Press

of him. "I'm going to die trying. It's been a roller coaster but now I've finally made it all this way, there's no way I'm going to let them go." Ruiz knows he will be up against a different Joshua this time around. A more focused and determined Joshua, who knows he is suddenly fighting to res-

East, somewhat controversially arranged amid concerns over Saudi Arabia's human-rights record, has been called the "Clash on the Dunes." As for Joshua, he's labeling it "Back to 16" — a reference to his 16th professional fight when he became world champion for the first time.

centrating on sparring and the "sweet science of the sport" instead of bulking up and doing weights.

He has even grown his hair into an Afro, as if he was boxing "in the '70s."

"I'm punching like a horse kicking back right now ... loose and heavy, rhythm and flow," said Joshua,

Interim coach Fewell to lead Panthers against Falcons

By **CHARLES ODUM**

AP Sports Writer

ATLANTA (AP) — Former Atlanta Falcons wide receiver Roddy White says he tells players, “You’re always being evaluated, whether you’re winning or losing.” The same is true for NFL coaches.

Panthers interim coach Perry Fewell begins his audition for the full-time position when Carolina visits Atlanta, where Falcons coach Dan Quinn’s status is uncertain, on Sunday.

“It gives me an opportunity to prove it, and it gives our players an opportunity to prove it,” said Fewell, who took over for the fired Ron Rivera on Tuesday. “That’s what we’re going to do. We’re going to go out and prove that we can win a football game this Sunday, and then we will move to the next objective.”

The Falcons (3-9) have been eliminated from playoff contention. Quinn took the Falcons to the Super Bowl in 2016 and another playoff berth the following year. This season will be his second straight with a losing record.

White, the Falcons’ all-time leader in receptions, will be inducted into the team’s Ring of Honor on Sunday. His 11 seasons with Atlanta included Quinn’s 2015 debut season.

“I think Dan is a good coach,” White said Wednesday. “I really have respect for him and the things he’s done for our organization.”

White is an assistant coach at Johns Creek High School in the Atlanta area. He said he has “zero” interest in becoming an NFL coach.

One reason is the instability of what he said is “a win-now league.”

The latest example of impatience came when Pan-

Quinn has been unable to fix such nagging problems as a poor running game, leaky protection for quar-

terback Matt Ryan and an Turner replaces his father, Norv, who was removed from the role and will serve as assistant to the head coach.

after missing two games with a sprained foot.

ALLEN REMAINS AT QB

Fewell announced season-ending foot surgery for Cam Newton this week. There has been no talk of playing third-round draft pick Will Grier, and Fewell said the Panthers will stick with second-year quarterback Kyle Allen against Atlanta.

Allen is 5-5 as a starter, but has lost five of his last six starts. He threw four interceptions and was sacked five times in last month’s loss to the Falcons.

STILL UPBEAT

Ryan said the Falcons haven’t given up on the season. “I think the mindset has been good,” he said. “We’ve got a good group of guys in this building that are committed to one another and committed to trying to play well for one another.”

RUN DEFENSE

The Panthers’ poor run defense helped lead to Rivera’s exit.

Defensive coordinator Eric Washington is expected to take over the play calls against Atlanta with some input from Fewell. Significant improvement may be difficult with defensive tackles Dontari Poe and Kawann Short on injured reserve.

The Panthers are allowing 137.5 yards per game on the ground and have surrendered a league-high 22 touchdowns rushing.

That could be good news for Freeman, who is still looking for his first rushing TD of the season.

Carolina has also allowed 18 run plays of 20 or more yards. □



Carolina Panthers’ Perry Fewell is shown during his first press conference as the NFL football team’s interim head coach, at Bank of America Stadium in Charlotte, N.C., Wednesday, Dec. 4, 2019.

Associated Press

thers owner David Tepper fired Rivera, who has the most wins of any coach in Carolina history (76-63-1 in the regular season).

Fewell was Carolina’s secondary coach before being named interim coach. Four straight losses left the Panthers (5-7) on the brink of elimination from the playoff race and prompted Tepper to move on from Rivera so he could begin searching for the next coach.

Fewell was interim coach in Buffalo in 2009.

“It helps that I’ve done this before,” he said. “I have this experience, so I know where to go, what to do and how to do it.”

inconsistent pass rush. Ryan was sacked nine times in last week’s 26-18 loss to New Orleans.

One of Atlanta’s few 2019 highlights was a 29-3 win at Carolina on Nov. 17, leaving Quinn 7-2 in the series.

The Falcons hope that sweeping the season series with the Panthers could be the start of a strong finish to a disappointing season. It’s not known if that would be enough to save Quinn’s job.

NEW TURNER IN CHARGE

Buried in the news of Rivera’s firing was that Tepper promoted quarterbacks coach Scott Turner to offensive coordinator and play caller.

There won’t likely be wholesale changes to the Panthers’ offense, but Scott Turner will hope to be more successful than his dad in the red zone. Carolina’s struggles near the goal line were a big factor in four losses this season.

HOPE FOR JULIO

Falcons wide receiver Julio Jones returned to practice this week after missing last week’s game with a shoulder injury.

It was the first game Jones missed since 2016.

He hasn’t had a touchdown catch since Week 3. Jones’ expected return would come one week after running back Devonta Freeman made his return

8 finalists announced for Art Rooney Sportsmanship Award

NEW YORK (AP) — Veterans Adrian Peterson, Calais Campbell and Thomas Davis Sr. are among the eight finalists for the NFL’s Art Rooney Sportsmanship Award.

The league revealed the finalists Thursday. Along with the Washington running back, Jacksonville defensive end and Los Angeles Chargers linebacker, they include Indianapolis wide receiver T.Y. Hilton; New England special teams ace

Matthew Slater; Detroit quarterback Matthew Stafford; San Francisco offensive tackle Joe Staley; and Los Angeles Rams safety Eric Weddle.

Staley is a finalist for the fifth consecutive season, while Campbell and Weddle are finalists for the second straight year.

Each NFL team nominates one man for the award, which recognizes players who exemplify out-

standing sportsmanship on the field. The award was created in 2014 in honor of the late founding owner of the Pittsburgh Steelers and a Pro Football Hall of Famer. A panel of former players select the eight finalists from the 32 nominees.

The panel is comprised of Hall of Famer Curtis Martin, Warrick Dunn, Karl Mecklenberg and Leonard Wheeler. The eight finalists will be

listed on the Pro Bowl ballot under the NFL Sportsmanship Award category. Past recipients have been Drew Brees, Luke Kuechly, Frank Gore, Charles Woodson and Larry Fitzgerald.

The winner, selected by the vote of the players, will be announced during the NFL Honors show Feb. 1, when The Associated Press NFL individual award winners are revealed. □

Google co-founders step aside as antitrust scrutiny heats up

By **RACHEL LERMAN**

AP Technology Writer

SAN FRANCISCO (AP) —

Google's co-founders are relinquishing their executive positions just as state and federal regulators, not to mention the Department of Justice and Congress, are taking a keen interest in the possible abuse of its privacy practices and market power.

But their long foreshadowed successor, Sundar Pichai, has been well prepped to serve as the public face of the company.

Larry Page and Sergey Brin are stepping down as CEO and president, respectively, of Google parent company Alphabet. The move caps more than two decades during which the pair have shepherded the one-time startup they founded in a Silicon Valley garage. Pichai, who has been Google's CEO since 2015, will now also head up Alphabet. The company isn't filling Brin's position as president.

Google is facing increasing criticism and investigations from authorities in the U.S. and Europe about its privacy practices and the nature of its many-legged business. That will now fall to Pichai to wrangle and push through, though Page might not be totally off the hook.

Democratic presidential candidate Elizabeth Warren, a senator from Massachusetts, tweeted a message aimed at Page on Wednesday: "Quick reminder: We do still expect you to testify before Congress. And changing your title while staying on the board and retaining effective control of it will not exempt you from accountability."

Page and Brin still hold a majority of voting shares of Alphabet. Each became \$1 billion richer Wednesday as Alphabet stock increased more than 2%. According to *Forbes* magazine, they already had a net worth of more than \$50 billion apiece.

Last year, Google raised hackles in Congress by



In this Sept. 2, 2008, file photo Google co-founders Sergey Brin, left, and Larry Page talk about the new Google Browser, "Chrome," during a news conference at Google Inc. headquarters in Mountain View, Calif.

Associated Press

refusing to send Page or Pichai to a hearing on Russian manipulation of internet services to sway U.S. elections. Congressional officials left an empty chair for Page at the witness table; top executives from Facebook and Twitter, meanwhile, turned up to testify. Offended lawmakers derided Google as "arrogant."

Although longtime tech analyst Tim Bajarin of Creative Strategies said he doesn't believe Brin and Page are leaving "because the fire is getting hotter," he said Pichai's role at Google has been preparing him for the increased government scrutiny.

Brin and Page, both 46, have noticeably backed out of the spotlight already. Both stopped making appearances earlier this year at the regular question-and-answer sessions with

employees, and Page didn't attend this summer's Alphabet shareholders meeting even though he was still in the CEO role.

Meanwhile, Alphabet has been positioning Pichai as the de facto leader, making him the top executive voice at shareholders meetings and on earnings call. It was Pichai who testified before Congress last December, defending the company against claims from Republicans that the search service is biased against conservatives.

Recently, Pichai changed the format of the employee question-and-answer sessions from a weekly occurrence to a monthly one. The executive shakeup will likely have little impact on the business, analysts from Cowen and Co. wrote in a note Tuesday. They called Pichai's Alphabet appointment a "formality."

Pichai assured employees in an internal email that his new job wouldn't mean he was taking a step back from Google.

"I will continue to be very focused on Google and the deep work we're doing to push the boundaries of computing and build a more helpful Google for everyone," he wrote.

Pichai, a 47-year-old immigrant from India, has worked at the company for 15 years, serving as a leader in projects to build Google's Chrome browser and overseeing Android. Pichai, who has an engineering background, took over as the head of Google's products before being promoted to CEO when Alphabet was created in 2015. He is known as a soft-spoken and respected manager.

Alphabet still boasts Google as its central fixture

and key moneymaker. But it's also made up of what are known as "other bets," or longshot projects. That includes drone company Wing and self-driving car firm Waymo.

In its early days, Google focused on only one business — cataloging the growing internet. Page and Brin started Google soon after they met as Stanford University graduate students in 1995.

The company has now become one of the most influential companies in the world. Google dominates online search and digital advertising and makes the world's most widely used operating system for smartphones, Android.

It's hard to make it through a whole day without using one of Google's services — ranging from online tools to email, cloud computing systems, phones and smart speaker hardware.

As Google grew, it faced more pressure from privacy advocates over its collection and use of personal information to target advertising.

It also has faced allegations that it abuses its dominance in search and online advertising to push out rivals. The company is the subject of numerous inquiries from Congress, the Department of Justice, U.S. state attorneys general and European authorities.

Page and Brin, in announcing the news Tuesday, said the company has "evolved and matured" in the two decades since its founding. Both promised to stay active as board members and shareholders.

Google's longest serving CEO is still Eric Schmidt, the former executive brought into the role in 2001 as a so-called "adult supervisor" for Brin and Page.

Schmidt stepped into the position as the company's board worried about the relative inexperience of Brin and Page to manage the growing company. He remained CEO until 2011, when Page once again became chief executive. Schmidt stayed on the board until this year. □

Holiday money-saving strategies that can backfire

By BEV O'SHEA
Associated Press

Holiday marketers have your number, and they know how to entice you to spend.

You try to rein it in. But two favorite strategies can lead to spending more, according to a 2018 survey by the Center for the New Middle Class, a research organization funded by Elevate, which lends to credit-challenged borrowers. Consumers who shopped at sales were 50% more likely to say they spent more than they expected. Among shoppers who used coupons, 38.5% said they overspent.

Many shoppers try to be careful instead of making a spending plan. Using a budget can feel like it's wringing the joy out of a happy season. Why? Giving feels good, says Jeff Kreisler, co-author of "Dollars and Sense: How We Misthink Money and How to Spend Smarter."

But simply being careful doesn't work, "because a lot of the reasons we make poor financial decisions are unconscious," says Kreisler, who's editor in chief



In this Nov. 29, 2019, file photo people walk by a Black Friday promotional at Cookie's department store in the Brooklyn Borough of New York.

Associated Press

of PeopleScience.com, which applies behavioral science to the marketplace.

However, you can position yourself to recognize — and overcome — overspending triggers.

USE THE BEST DEFENSE: A HOLIDAY BUDGET

Ashley Feinstein Gerstley, a financial coach

and founder of the Fiscal Femme website, advises setting aside time — not over an hour — to list holiday expenses. Build in a buffer, because you'll forget some things. But you'll be better off if you have a number in mind, she says. Be realistic, not rigid, about your budget. Otherwise, controlling expenses can

seem so futile you don't bother trying, she says. "It's like being on a strict diet and figuring if you cheated and had a cookie, you may as well eat the whole bag."

If you worry about overspending, consider getting a prepaid gift card in that amount, Kreisler says. It can help you stay aware

of what you are spending and what's left.

Having a successful holiday spending plan may also inspire you to create a budget to help you achieve financial goals throughout the year.

UNDERSTAND HOW SALES CAN COST YOU

Shopping sales can be smart — but only if you're strategic and aware of the psychology at play. Kreisler says if you see a \$100 cashmere sweater marked down to \$40, your brain registers "saving \$60." Train yourself to translate that to "spending \$40" and compare how it fits into your spending plan.

Then, figure out how much the sweater is worth to you. Would you still want it if \$40 was the regular price? It's the same sweater and the same money but minus the rush of feeling that you got a deal.

Watch out for impulse purchases, too. Gerstley says she's encountered products she never knew existed while shopping (think cell phone sanitizer or weighted blanket) and suddenly wanted them. Badly. She's a fan of "the 48-hour rule": Put the item back on the shelf or abandon your virtual cart, and if you still want it 48 hours later, go ahead and buy it. Often you won't, she says. Understand that marketers use one-day sales or even shorter buying windows to create urgency. □

Stocks fall in early trading as investors wait on trade

By DAMIAN J. TROISE
Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — Stocks wobbled between small gains and losses on Wall Street in early trading Thursday as investors waited for the latest news on negotiations to end the trade war between the U.S. and China.

The losses follow Wednesday's advance on a report that Washington and Beijing could be on track for a trade deal before new tariffs are set to hit some popular products, including smartphones, on Dec. 15. Investors received mixed signals earlier this week, including President Donald Trump's statement that he wouldn't mind waiting for a deal beyond the 2020 elections.

Existing tariffs have been a key sticking point in negotiations and China has

been calling for the U.S. to roll back some of them as part of the latest push for a deal.

Health care stocks led the decline. Gilead fell 1.8% and Edwards Lifesciences shed 2.7%. Retailers were also among the companies losing ground. Costco fell 1.2%.

Technology stocks also slipped. The sector has much to gain, or lose, in trade negotiations because many of the companies rely heavily on China for sales and supplies. Rising bond yields lifted banks. The sector relies on higher bond yields to charge more lucrative interest on loans. The yield on the 10-year Treasury rose to 1.81% from 1.78% late Wednesday.

KEEPING SCORE: The S&P 500 index fell 0.1% as of 10:25 a.m. Eastern time. The

Dow Jones Industrial Average fell 46 points, or 0.2%, to 27,600. The Nasdaq fell 0.2%. The Russell 2000 index of smaller company stocks fell less than 0.1%. European markets moved higher and Asian markets were mixed. **ECONOMY WATCH:** Wall Street has been assessing disappointing economic data this week in the lead-up to a highly anticipated jobs report.

Data released on Wednesday

showed that the U.S. services sector, which makes up the bulk of the economy, grew at a surprisingly slow pace. That does not bode well as a gauge for the economy while the manufacturing sector continues shrinking. Payroll processor ADP, on Wednesday, reported that private employers added far fewer jobs in November than economists expected. □

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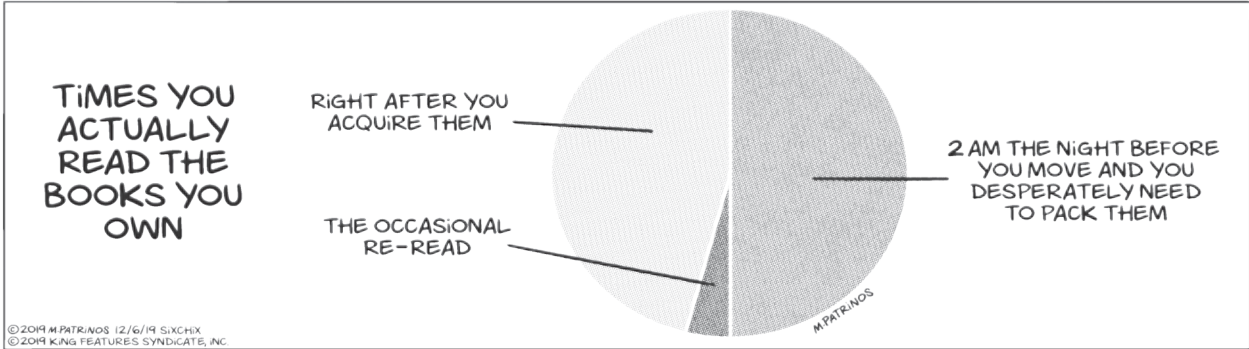
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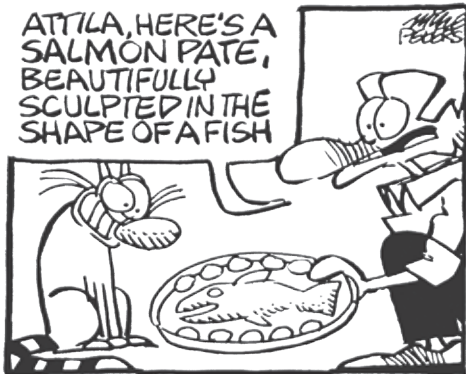
6 Chix



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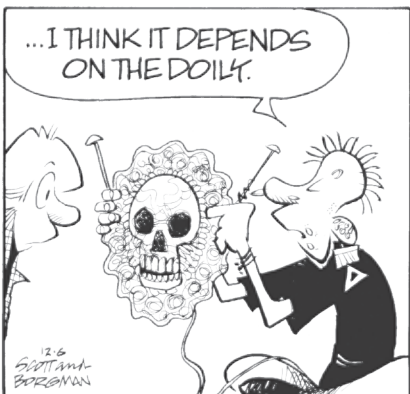
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Baby Blues



Zits



Conceptis Sudoku

	7		5	9		1	
1							5
		5	4			2	
						9	4
5							1
3		2					
		1			6	8	
9							6
	4			1	5	7	

Difficulty Level ★★★★★ 12/06

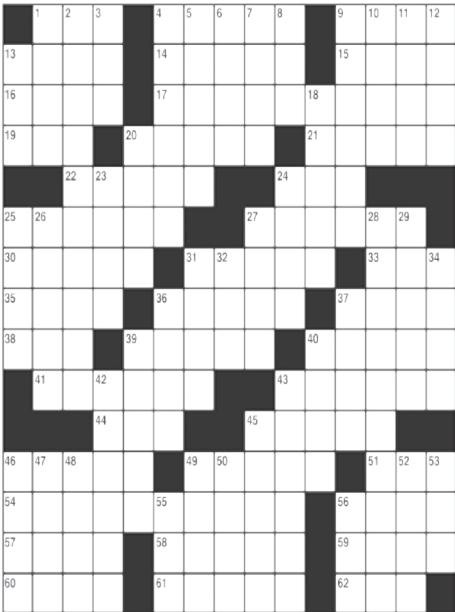
Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Sunday.

Yesterday's puzzle answer

5	1	9	3	2	8	7	4	6
7	8	4	5	1	6	3	2	9
3	6	2	9	7	4	8	5	1
2	7	1	4	8	5	6	9	3
8	5	6	7	3	9	4	1	2
4	9	3	2	6	1	5	8	7
9	4	7	1	5	3	2	6	8
1	3	8	6	4	2	9	7	5
6	2	5	8	9	7	1	3	4

ACROSS

- 1 Brooch
- 4 Prayer closings
- 9 Exchange
- 13 Saltwater fish
- 14 ___ with; supports verbally
- 15 Tried and ___; reliable
- 16 Uncertain
- 17 Crawling like a snake
- 19 Org. for Jaguars or Bengals
- 20 Autry & others
- 21 Hand protectors
- 22 Fill with bliss
- 24 Last month's calendar pg.
- 25 Proverbial sayings
- 27 St. ___, Vatican basilica
- 30 Put ___; shelf
- 31 Kelly or Slick
- 33 Leprechaun
- 35 Unruly hordes
- 36 Crack sealant
- 37 On the ___ of the moment
- 38 Everyone
- 39 Rounded edges
- 40 Provide shelter for
- 41 Double-dealing
- 43 Deplore
- 44 Phone inventor's initials
- 45 Winger or Messing
- 46 Higher than
- 49 Shout of approval
- 51 Best Buy purchases, perhaps
- 54 Breathe new life into
- 56 Car from Italy
- 57 Encounter
- 58 "See you ___!"
- 59 Like pink cheeks
- 60 Nimble
- 61 Gets rid of
- 62 ___ of a kind; unique thing



Created by Jacqueline E. Mathews

12/6/19

Thursday's Puzzle Solved

PAIR	CASTE	STAB
LIMA	ALTOS	TRUE
EMMY	PIONEERING	
ASA	BREW	RIOTS
	TWAIN	NOV
SHEENS	MISERS	
CORED	GRACE	EAT
AVID	PEEVE	MAGI
MEA	SEEDS	CESAR
LLAMAS	CHOOSE	
	DIR	BLOWN
SCOOT	CLAP	ACD
HORRENDOUS	IBLE	
OVEN	BASES	SLUM
PEGS	ANTS	TEES

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12/6/19

DOWN

- 1 "___ the Magic Dragon"
- 2 Unbending
- 3 Anti's vote
- 4 Valuables
- 5 Winnie-the-Pooh's creator
- 6 Actress Falco
- 7 Brooklyn hoopsters
- 8 Request for silence
- 9 Try hard
- 10 Court order
- 11 Meghan, to Prince Louis
- 12 Small dowels
- 13 Element whose symbol is Sn
- 18 Shed crocodile tears
- 20 Canasta or Old Maid
- 23 Can tops
- 24 Pain in the ___; pest
- 25 ___ Cass; late singer Elliot
- 26 Not ___ as; younger than
- 27 Compadres
- 28 Good name
- 29 Partially melted snow
- 31 Trot or canter
- 32 Bacardi specialty
- 34 Liberate
- 36 New parents' purchase
- 37 Zoom aloft
- 39 Sire children
- 40 Vagabond
- 42 Place for a filling
- 43 Crowbars
- 45 In a stupor
- 46 Bear ___; carry a gun
- 47 Horn toot
- 48 Think ___; contemplate
- 49 Feeling ___; in a funk
- 50 Religious ceremony
- 52 Bud holder
- 53 Animal enclosure
- 55 Jolson & Pacino
- 56 To & ___; pendulum's motion

Russian scientists present ancient puppy found in permafrost



This is a handout photo taken on Monday, Sept. 24, 2018, showing a 18,000 years old Puppy found in permafrost in the Russia's Far East, on display at the Yakutsk's Mammoth Museum, Russia.

By DARIA LITVINOVA

ROMAN KUTUKOV

Associated Press

YAKUTSK, Russia (AP) — Russian scientists on Monday showed off a prehistoric puppy, believed to be 18,000 years old, found in permafrost in the country's Far East.

Discovered last year in a lump of frozen mud near the city of Yakutsk, the puppy is unusually well-preserved, with its hair, teeth, whiskers and eyelashes still intact.

"This puppy has all its limbs, pelage — fur, even whiskers. The nose is visible. There are teeth. We can determine due to some data that it is a male," Nikolai Androsov, director of the Northern World private museum where the remains are stored, said at the presentation at the Yakutsk's Mammoth Museum which specializes in ancient specimens.

In recent years, Russia's Far East has provided many riches for scientists studying the remains of ancient animals. As the permafrost melts, affected by climate change, more and more parts of woolly mammoths, canines and other prehistoric animals are being discovered. Often it is mammoth tusk hunters who discover them.

"Why has Yakutia come through a real spate of such unique findings over the last decade? First, it's

global warming. It really exists, we feel it, and local people feel it strongly. Winter comes later, spring comes earlier," Sergei Fyodorov, scientist with the North Eastern Federal University, told The Associated Press.

"And the second very serious, deep reason, of why there a lot of finds is the very high price of mammoth tusk in the Chinese market."

When the puppy was discovered, scientists from the Stockholm-based Center for Palaeogenetics took a piece of bone to study its DNA.

"The first step was of course to send the sample to radio carbon dating to see how old it was and when

we got the results back it turned out that it was roughly 18,000 years old," Love Dalén, professor of evolutionary genetics at the center, said in an on-line interview.

Further tests, however, left the scientists with more questions than answers — they couldn't definitively tell whether it was a dog or a wolf.

"We have now generated a nearly complete genome sequence from it and normally when you have a two-fold coverage genome, which is what we have, you should be able to relatively easily say whether it's a dog or a wolf, but we still can't say and that makes it even more interesting," Dalén said. □

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Experts say Mekong River's new color a worrying sign

By **BUSABA SIVASOMBOON**
Associated Press

BANGKOK (AP) — The Mekong River has recently acquired an aquamarine color that may beguile tourists but also indicates a problem caused by upstream dams, experts in Thailand say.

The river usually has a yellowish-brown shade due to the sediment it normally carries downstream. But lately it has been running clear, taking on a blue-green hue that is a reflection of the sky. The water levels have also become unusually low, exposing sandbanks that allow the curious to stand in the middle of the river.

Low water levels pose an obvious problem for fishermen and farmers, but experts say the decline in sediment exposes a different danger that can result in greater erosion of the river's banks and bed.

The experts and people living along the river blame a large hydroelectric dam upstream in Laos that began operating in October for contributing to both problems, though rainfall has also been sparse.

Around 70 million people depend on the Mekong River for water, food, commerce, irrigation and transportation. Critics charge that large-scale development projects such as the Xayaburi dam dangerously disrupt the region's ecology.

The dam blocks much sediment from moving further downstream, which accounts for the water becoming clear, said Pravit Kanthaduang, chief of the fishery office at Bueng Khong Long, a district in Thailand's Bueng Kan province. Less sediment means less nutrition for plants and



In this Wednesday, Dec. 4, 2019, photo, fishing boats are moored in Mekong River, which has turned blue instead of its usual muddy color, in Nakhon Phanom province, northeastern Thailand. Associated Press

fish in the river, threatening the ecological balance, he said.

With less sediment, the water also has more stream power, a phenomenon known as "hungry water," said Chainarong Setthachau of the Faculty of Humanities and Social Science at Mahasarakham University in Thailand's northeast who has studied changes in the Mekong's ecology for the past two decades.

"The current has less sediment, which unleashes energy onto the river banks downstream. This so-called 'hungry water' will cause much more erosion to the banks, uprooting trees and damaging engineering structures in the river," Chainarong said.

The dam's developers have denied that they were responsible for low water levels that some critics tied to trial runs of the generators that began

in March. In October, the Xayaburi Power Co. Ltd. said the project has spent more than 19.4 billion baht (\$640 million) to mitigate negative impacts on the environment, including the building of outlets for sedi-

ment passage and flow and facilities to allow the passage of fish. The plant's total cost was \$4.47 billion. Daeng Pongpim, from a farming family that used to fish in Ta Mui village in Ubon Ratchathani province, lives

800 kilometers (500 miles) downstream from the Xayaburi dam, but said she still believes it is responsible for the river's recent unusual condition.

"I am 67 years old and have never seen anything like it before. What makes me concerned the most is the low level of the water. Now, we are in early winter, the water level should not be this low. I can't imagine how hard it could be for us at the height of the dry season, in March and April."

Chaiwat Parakun, who lives 200 kilometers (125 miles) downstream from the dam, said he abandoned his fishing gear several years ago because of the declining amount of fish available to catch. He now has a tourism business.

"The Mekong has gradually lost its abundance. People who depend on the river like us could sense it many years ago. But that was nothing like the effects from Xayaburi. We cannot figure out how we can live with this degraded environment," he said. □

SpaceX launches caring robot, beer malt and 'mighty mice'

By **MARCIA DUNN**
AP Aerospace Writer
CAPE CANAVERAL, Fla.

(AP) — SpaceX launched a 3-ton shipment to the International Space Station on Thursday, including "mighty mice" for a muscle study, a robot sensitive to astronauts' emotions and a miniature version of a brewery's malt house.

The Dragon capsule also is delivering holiday goodies for the six station residents. NASA's Kenny Todd isn't giving any hints, but said, "Santa's sleigh, I think, is certified for the vacuum of space."

The recycled capsule should arrive Sunday. The Falcon rocket blasted off from Cape Canaveral a day late because of high winds. SpaceX aimed to recover the new booster on a barge



A Falcon 9 SpaceX rocket on a resupply mission to the International Space Station stands ready for today's launch at Space Launch Complex 40 at Cape Canaveral Air Force Station in Cape Canaveral, Fla., Thursday, Dec. 5, 2019. Associated Press

just off the coast in the Atlantic so it could be reused.

This is SpaceX's 19th supply run for NASA.

Forty mice are aboard, all adolescent females with black fur. Eight of them are genetically engineered with double the normal amount of muscle. There are also barley grains for a beer-malting experiment by Anheuser-Busch.

The shipment also includes a large, plastic 3-D printed robot head with artificial intelligence, according to its German creators. It's named Cimon, pronounced Simon, the same as the prototype that flew up last year. This upgraded version is designed to show empathy to its human colleagues in orbit.

The space station currently is home to three Americans, two Russians and one Italian. □



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Baghdad tunnel becomes a museum for Iraq's protest movement

By QASSIM ABDUL-ZAHRA
Associated Press

BAGHDAD (AP) — The images are both haunting and inspiring, transforming a once dreary, grim underpass into a vivid, colorful wall of art.

"We want a nation, not a prison," says one painting that depicts a man bursting free from behind bars. "Plant a revolution, and you will harvest a nation," reads another showing a hand flashing the victory sign over protesters' heads. Some of the messages are less sentimental. "Look at us, Americans, this is all your fault," declares one.

The Saadoun Tunnel has become an ad hoc museum for Iraq's massive anti-government protest movement. Along its walls, young artists draw murals, portraits and graffiti that illustrate the country's tortured past and the Iraq they aspire to.

The tunnel passes under Baghdad's Tahrir Square, the epicenter of the protests where thousands of people are camped out in a giant sit-in that has taken on the feel of a vibrant mini-city. Almost daily, clashes erupt with security forces not far away firing tear gas, live rounds and stun grenades to prevent



In this Monday, Nov. 18, 2019 photo, a woman poses for a photo in front of graffiti at the Saadoun tunnel, in Baghdad, Iraq.

Associated Press

protesters from crossing bridges over the Tigris River to the Green Zone, the seat of Iraq's government. Tuk tuks — three-wheeled motorcycle transports — often zip back and forth through the Saadoun Tunnel, rushing wounded protesters from the front lines to medical clinics.

Saadoun Tunnel, the tuk tuks, the square and a nearby 14-story Saddam Hussein-era building on the

Tigris that protesters took over have all become symbols of what has become the largest grassroots protest movement Iraq has seen. The protests erupted Oct. 1 over longstanding grievances at corruption, unemployment and a lack of basic services and quickly escalated into calls to sweep aside Iraq's sectarian system imposed after the 2003 U.S. invasion and its entire political elite.

Young protesters, men and women, throng the tunnel — actually a long underpass, most of which is open to the air except for enclosed portions directly beneath Tahrir — and pass time there hanging out or taking selfies in front of the murals. Caricatures on the walls mock Iraqi politicians; other paintings praise the tuk tuks; a woman with an Iraqi flag on her cheek flexes her bicep, recreat-

ing the famed U.S. "We Can Do It" poster; faces in drawings shout in anger or pain.

Haydar Mohammed said he and a group of other medical students were partly responsible for the murals. They met in Tahrir and saw the tunnels walls were a perfect medium to send a message to those who are suspicious of the protesters, he said.

"We are life-makers not death-makers," he said. "We decided to draw simple paintings to support our protester brothers and to express our message, which is a peace message."

Many of the murals carry calls for anti-sectarianism, peace and a free Iraq. In one painting, a little girl cries, declaring "They killed my dream," referring to the group of men behind her, some in religious clothes.

Another shows an Iraqi protester wearing a helmet against tear gas with the Arabic words: "In the heart is something that cannot be killed by guns, which is the nation." Nearby is scrawled, in English, "All What I want is life." "Sitting in front of these portraits, people and candles is better than being in any coffeshop. ☐"

Chanel celebrates its artisans in glimmering Paris show

Associated Press

PARIS (AP) — Chanel brought its itinerant off-season fashion show the "arts and crafts," with its swath of VIPs including Penelope Cruz and Marion Cotillard, back to home ground in Paris on Wednesday to mark its first collection since Karl Lagerfeld died earlier this year.

New designer Virginie Viard teamed up with film director Sofia Coppola this season to imagine a cinematic opus that saw the house's 1920s Rue Cambon atelier replete with crystal chandeliers and mirrored cubist staircase recreated under the lofty roof of the Grand Palais exhibition space. Unlike the seasonal collections that trickle down to



Models wear creations for Chanel's Metiers d'Art collection presented at the Grand Palais in Paris, Wednesday, Dec. 4, 2019.

Associated Press

set high street trends, the "arts and crafts" pre-collection aims at showing off and celebrating the work of the artisans that are the beating heart of Chanel, and the Paris fashion industry as a whole. Celebrating their technical know-how is one way that storied Paris heritage houses have tried to distinguish themselves in the face of increased competition from other fashion capitals, such as New York and Milan.

The first looks, in black with oversized statement shoulders, were simple enough as to let the embellishments do the talking: Large silvery art-deco waist bands with beading, bejeweled cuff bands or large geometric buttons with silver rims. ☐

From 'Knives Out' to Bond, Ana de Armas is on the rise

By LINDSEY BAHR
Associated Press

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Ana de Armas is fumbling with a packet of sugar and talking about her break-neck schedule on a recent afternoon in Los Angeles when her already enormous almond eyes widen even further.

"Do I have avocado on my face?" she asks somewhat nervously. She doesn't, but the 31-year-old Cuba-born

actress has been feeling a little frazzled lately. It's been hard to find time to eat, let alone do a spot check in a mirror. De Armas left the New Orleans set of Adrian Lyne's Patricia Highsmith adaptation "Deep Water" the night before to attend the premiere of Rian Johnson's Agatha Christie-inspired whodunnit "Knives Out," which opens on Thanksgiving. It was a brief respite;



This image released by Lionsgate shows Ana de Armas in a scene from "Knives Out."

Associated Press

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OZUNA | CLARRISA MOLINA

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SPANISH

PH	MON-THU	6:10 8:30
	FRI	6:10 8:30 10:50
	SAT	3:50 6:10 8:30 10:50
	SUN	3:50 6:10 8:30
PBP	MON-THU	4:50 7:05 9:20
	FRI	4:50 7:05 9:20 11:35
	SAT	2:35 4:50 7:05 9:20 11:35
	SUN	2:35 4:50 7:05 9:20

TAYLOR RUSSELL | KELVIN HARRISON JR.

WAVES

PBP MON-FRI 5:45
SAT-SUN 2:50 | 5:45

OLGA KURYLENKO | GARY OLDMAN

THE COURIER

PH MON-FRI 7:10 | 9:30
SAT-SUN 2:30 | 4:50 | 7:10 | 9:30

HELEN MIRREN | IAN MCKELLEN

THE GOOD LIAR

WITH SPANISH SUBTITLES

PH MON-FRI 6:45 | 9:10
SAT-SUN 1:55 | 4:20 | 6:45 | 9:10

KARTIK AARYAN | BHUJVI PEDNEKAR

PATI PATNI AUR WOHO

PBP MON-FRI 3:40 | 6:25 | 9:10
SAT-SUN 12:55 | 3:40 | 6:25 | 9:10

CHADWICK BOSEMAN | J.K. SIMMONS

21 BRIDGES

KRISTEN BELL | IDINA MENZEL

FROZEN II

WITH SPANISH SUBTITLES **(PG)**

PH	MON-THU	6:00 7:20 8:35
	FRI	6:00 7:20 8:35 10:00
	SAT	2:30 3:30 4:55 6:00 7:20 8:35 10:00
	SUN	2:30 3:30 4:55 6:00 7:20 8:35
VIP	MON-THU	5:25 7:50
	FRI	5:25 7:50 10:15
PBP	MON-THU	5:25 7:50 10:15
	SAT	3:00 5:25 7:50
PBP	MON-FRI	4:40 7:00
	SAT-SUN	2:00 4:40 7:00

DANIEL CRAIG | CHRIS EVANS

Knives Out

WITH SPANISH SUBTITLES **(PG-13)**

PBP MON-FRI 3:45 | 6:30 | 9:15
SAT-SUN 1:00 | 3:45 | 6:30 | 9:15

KRISTEN STEWART | NAOMI SCOTT

CHARLES ANGELS

WITH SPANISH SUBTITLES **(PG-13)**

PBP MON-FRI 9:20

CHRISTIAN BALE | MATT DAMON

FORD v FERRARI

WITH SPANISH SUBTITLES **(PG-13)**

PBP MON-SUN 8:40

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after a few days of interviews, de Armas flew back to continue filming.

And it's been that way for a few years now. She's filmed not only "Knives Out," but the next James Bond, "No Time To Die," the Marilyn Monroe movie "Blonde" (she plays none other than the former Norma Jeane) and a film about the late United Nations diplomat Sergio Vieira de Mello.

In fact, she was looking forward to a little bit of a break when "Knives Out" came her way at the tail end of the grueling three-month shoot for "Sergio" in Thailand. And the description she got wasn't exactly an enticing one.

"I got this email saying, 'Nurse in a house and she's Latina and she's pretty and this is the scene,'" she recalled. "And I was like 'Are you kidding me? I don't know what this is about.' That little description doesn't say anything to me, it doesn't speak to me."

De Armas knew that Johnson had written and would direct the film and that a big star, Daniel Craig, was attached. She's also protective of her career and needed to know more before she would even agree to audition. Although she speaks naturally with an accent, she's worked hard to prove herself capable of playing characters outside

of her ethnicity and pushes her team to send her out on auditions for everything. This innate determination and unwillingness to settle has gotten her where she is and now she's on the brink of full-fledged stardom. After attending theater school in Havana, she moved to Madrid with \$300 saved up to try a bigger pond. It was an amount that she assumed would help her survive for a few months (it would have in Cuba) but she quickly discovered otherwise. Still, de Armas found a way and started landing roles in television and film. After 8 years there, she was ready to move on and try Hollywood even though she knew very little English.

One thing she had going for her was that she had an agent and manager, thanks to her "Hands of Stone" co-star Edgar Ramirez, who had introduced her to his team. When she arrived in Los Angeles, where she and a friend rented a single room and shared a bed, de Armas enrolled in English classes but also told her agents that she didn't want to wait. She wanted to start auditioning.

"I was clear that the reason I was here was not to get a degree in English," she said.

"I forced them to send me out to auditions and

meetings, even though I couldn't understand half of it."

Her big break came in true Hollywood fashion. Standing at the valet outside the CAA agency, producer Colleen Camp spotted her and started taking pictures and screaming about how she had to meet Eli Roth immediately. They were casting for the thriller "Knock Knock" with Keanu Reeves, but de Armas was literally on her way to the airport.

She managed to meet Roth, suitcases in hand, and make the flight. They closed the deal the next day.

"My agent was like, 'I need to take you out to lunch more often,'" de Armas said, laughing. Still a little shaky with English, she got through the shoot by pronouncing her lines phonetically.

"Knock Knock" opened the doors for other opportunities. She landed a role in Todd Phillips' "War Dogs" and then in "Blade Runner 2049" as Ryan Gosling's hologram girlfriend. It's also why Andrew Dominik thought of her to play Marilyn Monroe.

De Armas knows she's demanding with her team. She had to fight for access to the closely guarded "Knives Out" script, but after she read it she realized she had to do it. ❑

Chrissy Teigen, Kim Raver and more cheer 'Sesame Street'

Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — You can never be too old for "Sesame Street." The beloved children's series premiered 50 years ago this month and is still a favorite among both kids and adults.

Some celebrities share their thoughts on seeing the show — and some of being on the show.

"'Sesame Street' is, I think, the purest form of entertainment that has ever come through the television screens. I grew up watching 'Sesame Street.' Seeing them grow along with the changing times, along with the impact that they've made on children who were going through different struggles, whether it was their parents divorcing or autism — they've adapted to so many different situations, but they've always had the purest heart with it. 'Sesame Street' actually makes me emotional with how caring and loving and pure and kind they've been throughout the years. It's



This Jan. 6, 2019 file photo shows actress-comedian Carol Burnett at the 76th annual Golden Globe Awards in Beverly Hills, Calif.

just nothing lights up a kid's face like seeing Elmo." — TV personality Chrissy Teigen.

"I forgot that there were people there. They were so real. I really felt like I was dealing with these critters and these creatures that were created so beautifully.

The puppeteers were ab-

solutely brilliant because you forgot that they were there. They just knew how to do it." — Comedy icon Carol Burnett, who appeared in the first broadcast and returned frequently.

"I learned how to count on 'Sesame Street.' I learned the alphabet.

While people were watch-

ing it on television, I was part of it, so that to me was really, I think, the beginning of this very creative world." — Actress Kim Raver, a former child "Sesame Street" cast member.

"Jim Henson's been one of my idols ever since I was a little kid. I still have a workshop down in my basement right now where I make

puppets out of foam, ping pong balls for eyes and things. I think there's something so special about making inanimate objects animate and when they can teach kids globally about not only letters and numbers and vowels but about sharing and responsibility, that's something that will endure for 50 more years realistically." — Actor Neil Patrick Harris.

"'Sesame Street' just has always pushed the envelope and pushed us to look at ourselves in a different way and each other in a compassionate way.

And they did it with humor and they did it in a way that made it very palatable. So I think that's the genius of the show and why it's touched so many for so long." — Actor/director Emilio Estevez.

"I definitely watched it as a kid. I think it's not just entertainment, you know? I think there's some lessons to learn behind it and I think as humans, we're drawn to that. □

Associated Press

New Orleans is home to mystical academy in new Marvel comic

By KEVIN MCGILL

Associated Press

NEW ORLEANS (AP) — The city known for 19th century Voodoo queen Marie Laveau and for the tarot card readers who tell fortunes in its historic French Quarter is about to play host to a different kind of sorcerer — at least in the Marvel comics universe. Marvel announced plans Thursday to debut a new comic book, "Strange Academy," in March. Described as a supernatural coming-of-age saga, it's set at a New Orleans school for teenagers from across the universe who have a variety of mystical powers.

The youngsters, facing typical adolescent anxieties and atypical creatures from other dimensions, will be new characters. But they'll be under the tutelage of some Marvel stalwarts, including the school's flamboyant caped namesake, Doc-



In this June 2019 photo provided by Marvel Comics, Marvel writer Skottie Young, assistant editors Danny Khazem and Kathleen Wisneski, and executive editor Nick Lowe sit inside the historic Lafitte's Blacksmith Shop in the French Quarter of New Orleans.

Associated Press

tor Strange.

Veteran Marvel writer and artist Skottie Young is working with longtime Marvel artist Humberto Ramos on the project. In an in-

terview this week, Young said he and co-workers first thought about setting the story in New York, where the Doctor Strange character resides.

Young, however, had recently visited New Orleans for the first time, celebrating his 40th birthday.

"It just kind of occurred to me that there's a nice his-

tory and folklore about magic and the mystic arts and the dark arts and things like that that kind of surround the mythos of New Orleans," Young said. "Having just gone there myself for my 40th, I thought that would be a great place to set it. And that it would be awesome just to go back again and do a nice little research trip."

Marvel editors accompanied Young on a return trip. Visits to a French Quarter Voodoo museum, a 280-year-old candle-lit bar on Bourbon Street, courtyards with rusty gates and untamed greenery — all will inform the story lines and art of the new publication.

Young said the series is aimed at a broad comic book audience but also will appeal to young adult readers who in the past might have been fans of the Harry Potter novels or similar works. □

Restoring forests 1 tree at a time, to help repair climate

By **CHRISTINA LARSON**
Associated Press
MADRE DE DIOS, Peru (AP)

Destruction of the forests can be swift. Regrowth is much, much slower. But around the world, people are putting shovels to ground to help it happen. They labor amid spectacular recent losses — the Amazon jungle and the Congo basin ablaze, smoke from Indonesian rainforests wafting over Malaysia and Singapore, fires set mostly to make way for cattle pastures and farm fields. Between 2014 and 2018, a new report says, an area the size of the United Kingdom was stripped of forest each year.

Rebuilding woodland is slow and often difficult work. And it requires patience: It can take several decades or longer for forests to regrow as viable habitats, and to absorb the same amount of carbon lost when trees are cut and burned.

And yet, there is urgency to that work: forests are one of the planet's first lines of defense against climate change, absorbing as much as a quarter of man-made carbon emissions each year.

Through photosynthesis, trees and other plants use carbon dioxide, water and sunlight to produce chemical energy to fuel their growth; oxygen is released as a byproduct. As forests have shrunk, however, so has an already overloaded Earth's capacity to cope with carbon emissions.

Successful reforestation



A tree planted by police during "Operation Mercury" stands amid jungle destroyed by illegal miners, near a makeshift airstrip at the Balata police and military base in Peru's Tambopata province on March 28, 2019.

programs take into account native plant species. They are managed by groups with a sustained commitment to monitoring forests, not just one-off tree planting events. And usually, they economically benefit the people who live nearby for instance, by creating jobs, or reducing erosion that damages homes or crops.

The impact could be great: A recent study in the journal *Science* projected that if 0.9 billion hectares (2.2 billion acres) of new trees were planted — around 500 billion saplings — they could absorb 205 gigatonnes (220 gigatons) of carbon once they reached maturity. The Swiss researchers estimated this would be equivalent to about two-thirds of man-

made carbon emissions since the start of the Industrial Revolution.

Other scientists dispute those calculations, while some fear the theoretical promise of tree-planting as an easy solution to climate changes could distract people from the range and scope of the responses needed.

But all agree that trees matter. And in many places around the world, people are working to revive them: — In a region of southeastern Peru called Madre de Dios, forestry researcher Jhon Farfan inspects lands where the forest has already been lost to illegal gold mining.

After cutting and burning centuries-old trees, miners used diesel pumps to suck up deep layers of the earth, then pushed the soil through filters to separate out gold particles. To turn gold dust into nuggets, they stirred in mercury, which binds the gold together but also poisons the land.

Left behind are patches of desert-like land — dry, sandy, stripped of topsoil and ringed by trunks of dead trees.

Last December, Farfan and other scientists with the Peru-based nonprofit CINCIA planted more than 6,000 saplings of various species native to this part of the

Amazon, including the giant shihuahuaco, and tested different fertilizers. Since the project began three years ago, the team has planted more than 42 hectares (115 acres) with native seedlings, the largest reforestation effort in the Peruvian Amazon to date.

After miners left West Virginia's Cheat Mountain in the 1980s, there was an effort to green the coal mining sites to comply with U.S. law. The companies used heavy machinery to push upturned soil back into place, compacting the mountainside with bulldozers. The result was soil so packed in that rainwater couldn't seep down, and tree roots couldn't expand. Companies planted "desperation species" grasses

with shallow roots or non-native trees that could endure, but wouldn't reach their full height or restore the forest as it had been. On Cheat Mountain and at other former mining sites across Appalachia, more than a million acres of former forests are in similar arrested development.

Now Michael French, director of operations for the Kentucky-based nonprofit Green Forests Work, and his colleagues are collaborating with the U.S. Forest Service to restore native Appalachian forests and the rare species they support by first tearing down other trees.

Green Forests Work has reforested around 800 acres within the Monongahela, and it is taking a similar approach to other former mining sites across Appalachia, having reforested around 4,500 total acres since 2009. Maria Coelho da Fonseca Machado Moraes, nicknamed Dona Graça, runs a tree nursery that grows seedlings of species native to Brazil's lesser-known jungle the Atlantic coastal rainforest. □

She collaborates with a nonprofit group called Save the Golden Lion Tamarin, which works to protect and restore the forest habitat of the endangered namesake monkey. "The Atlantic rainforest is one of the planet's most threatened biomes, more than 90% of it was deforested," said Luis Paulo Ferraz, the nonprofit's executive secretary. "What is left is very fragmented." □



Maria Coelho da Fonseca Machado Moraes, nicknamed Dona Graça, delivers young trees that she raised, to the ONG Golden Lion Tamarin Association in Silva Jardim, Brazil, Tuesday, April 16, 2019.

Associated Press



Forestry researcher Jhon Farfan carries saplings to replant a field damaged by illegal gold miners in Madre de Dios, Peru, on March 29, 2019.

Associated Press